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THE HISTORY OF THE 22nd MILITARY AIRLIFT SQUADRON

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THE HISTORY OF THE 22ND MILITARY AIRLIFT SQUADRON

BY

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EDITED and ILLUSTRATED

BY

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MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

all members of the 22MASq:

past, present, and those yet

to come . . .

LIEUTENTANT COLONEL FRANK W. CONTESTABLE
COMMANDER

PREFACE

This book deals with the highlights and related human events that have happened to the 22nd Military Airlift Squadron since it was born April 3rd, 1942 at Essendon Airdome near Melborne, Australia. Although it is almost 80 pages in content it represents only a small fraction of the unit's proud history. Spawned early in World War II, the stubborn mule was destined to participate in every major United States conflict for the next 27 years. This is the story of men, airplanes they loved and flew, the far flung places their flying machines took them, and what the machines did while they were there. This is the story of achievements of many men who flowed through the Squadron during its lifetime. Chapter 5 contains more detail and singles out individual outstanding deeds. This is so because it is contemporary; the names, places and events are still fresh on our minds; the Distinguished Flying Cross award for members of the MAC Airlift Squadron not stationed in the combat area is rare; and lastly because the humble author of Chapter 5, Captain Eric V. Tait, Jr., lived and flew with these men to the places mentioned. It is a living history because we are still operating our normal daily missions in Southeast Asia and it will continue at that pace until the last flying hour has been flown. With a current record of 15,000 accident free combat hours flown in RVN, the 22nd MASq will go into limbo awaiting the call to duty so that it may proudly serve again . . . . as a part of the Jet Set.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In Gratitude To The Following:

Lt. Col. Jacques, Major Langebartel, Lt. Col. Van Sicklen, Col Hunter, Sgt Carroll and all other 22nd Squadron members who's contributions, photographic and otherwise, enabled an accurate compilation with the added, personal "human touch."

65th MAGp, Operational Requirements section whose willing cooperation provided much accurate, pertinent data.

Mrs. Altheria M. Hudson whose long hours of skillful typing enabled us to achieve a fine, polished product.

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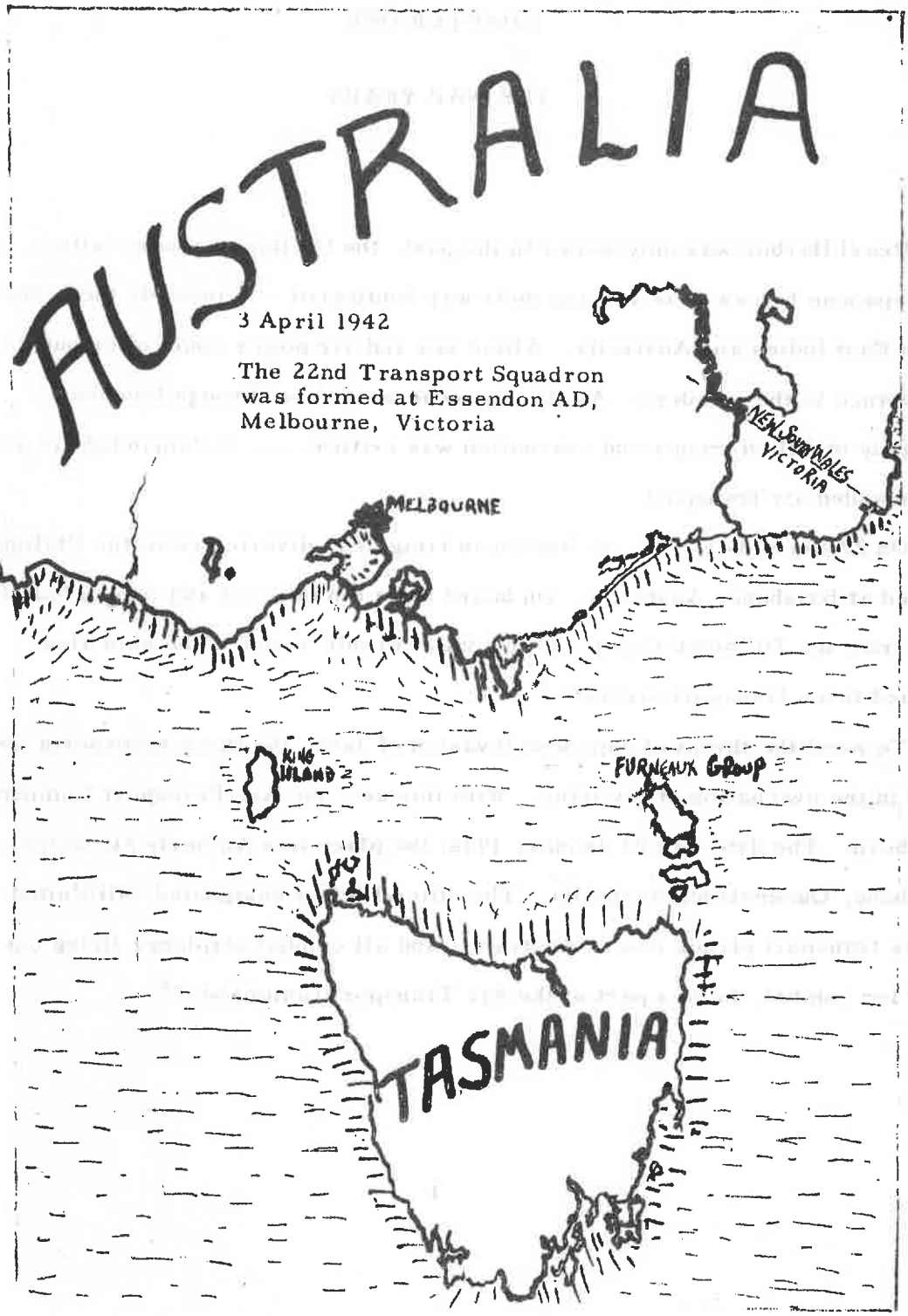
CHAPTER ONE

THE WAR YEARS

Pearl Harbor was only weeks in the past, the Philippines were falling, and the Japanese forces were forging their way Southward --- towards the Netherlands East Indies and Australia. Allied sea and air power could offer but token resistance to the invaders. As the Japanese pushed on through Indonesia, resupply of Allied troops and evacuation was critical --- it demanded air power; it demanded air transport.

On 22 December 1941, an American freighter, diverted from the Philippines, docked at Brisbane, Australia. On board were ten officers and fifteen enlisted men from the 7th Bomb Group and the 35th Pursuit Group. The ship also carried three transport aircraft. [1]

To meet the threat of Japanese invasion of Java, the three transports were used in the evacuation of civilians. With this act, the Air Transport Command was born. The date was 22 January 1942; the place was Amberly airdrome, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. The official letter designated "all United States transport planes now in Australia, and all combat airplanes flying but unfit for combat, to be a part of the Air Transport Command." [2]

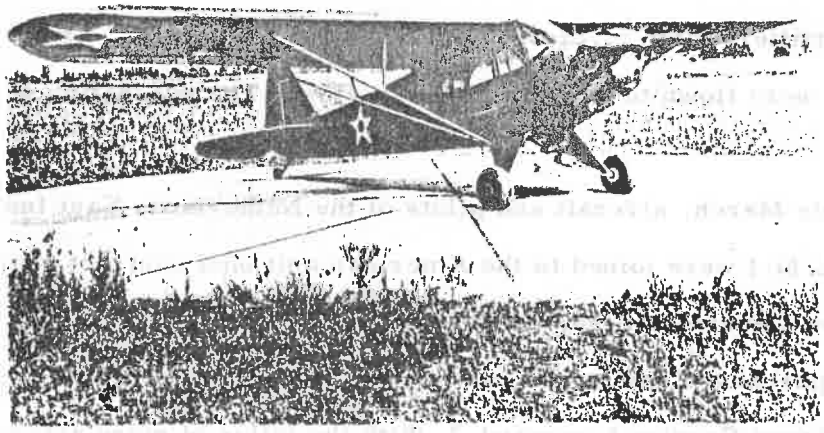

AUSTRALIA
3 April 1942
The 22nd Transport Squadron was formed at Essendon AD, Melbourne, Victoria
NEW SOUTH WALES
VICTORIA
MELBOURNE
KING ISLAND
FURNEAUX GROUP
TASMANIA

Troop carriers played an important part in aerial delivery during the early months of 1942. For the first time in air history, an entire fully-equipped battalion was airlifted over 1800 miles as the troop carriers transported the 102nd Coast Artillery (anti-aircraft) from Brisbane to Darwin.[3] P-40 mechanics and equipment were flown to forward bases in Java. The evacuation of civilians continued.

Then in late March, aircraft and pilots of the Netherlands East Indies Air-lines (K. N. I. L. M.) were joined to the American unit on a contract basis. The Dutch had flown any aircraft they could salvage from Java to Australia. These aircraft were purchased and turned over to the Air Transport Command, now known as the Troop Carrier Command.[4] With the influx of more aircraft and pilots, the Troop Carrier Command, Archer Field, Brisbane, was redesignated as the 21st Transport Squadron on 3 April, 1942.[5]

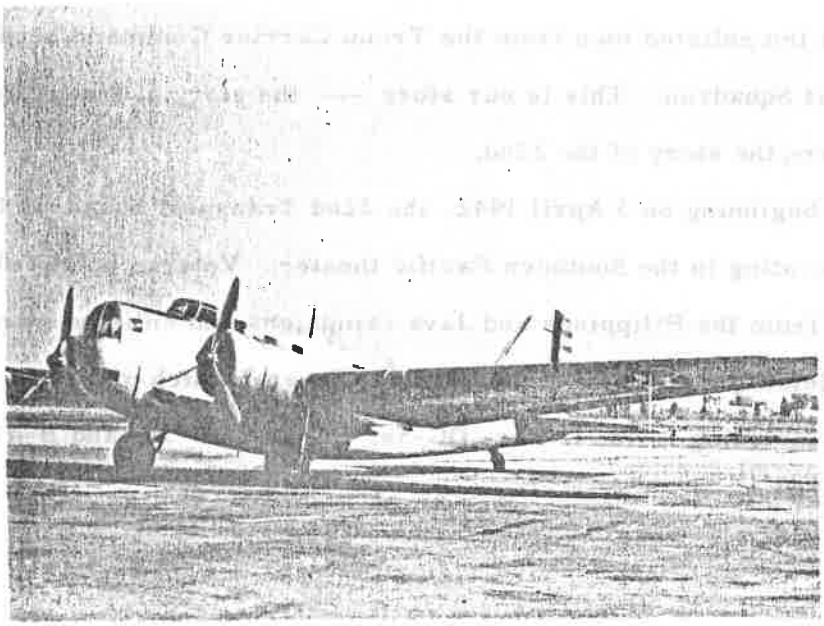
3 April 1942 . . . . . Nine hundred miles to the south of Brisbane, at Essendon airdrome, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, another squadron was born. Ten pilots and ten enlisted men from the Troop Carrier Command became the 22nd Transport Squadron. This is our story --- the story of troop carriers --- of cargo movers, the story of the 22nd.

From its beginning on 3 April 1942, the 22nd Transport Squadron became a major unit operating in the Southern Pacific theater. Veteran bombardment and pursuit pilots from the Pilippines and Java campaigns and enlisted men from the U. S. A. completed the strength of the 22nd.[6] Several Dutch planes (from K. N. I. L. M.) including L-4s, C-56s, DC-5s, DC-2s, DC-3s, and B-17s, were flown by the 22nd.



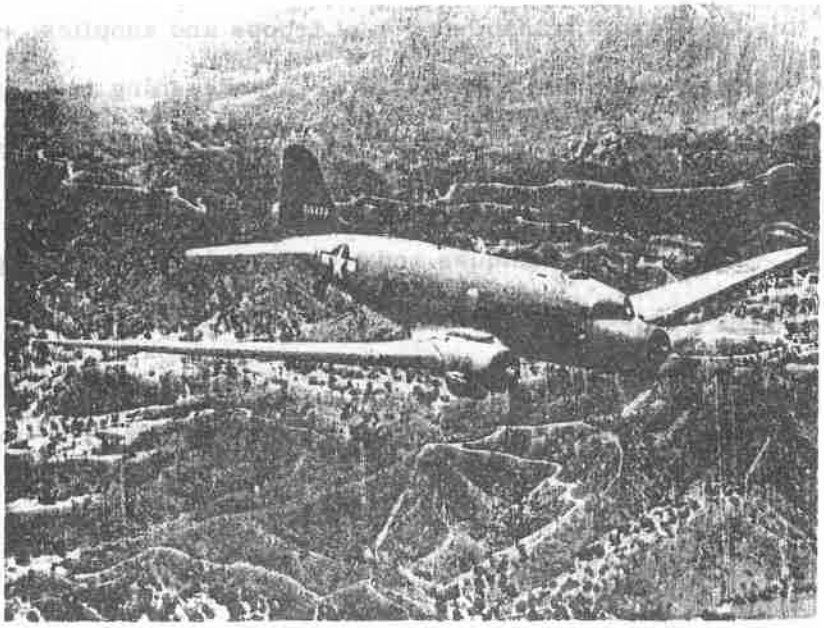
PIPER L-14

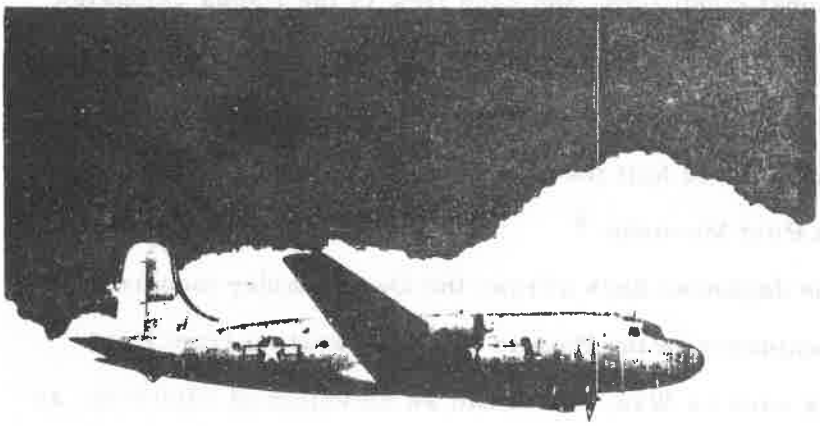
B-18



In its first test under combat conditions, the 22nd flew in the Papua campaign supplying and bringing reinforcements to Australian troops fighting at Kokoda, a small civilian mountain airstrip. Outnumbered and outgunned, the Australians retreated from Kokoda and managed to halt the Japanese offensive at Iorabaiwa ridge, only thirty miles from Port Moresby.[8]

The long fight to drive the Japanese back across the Owen Stanley mountains brought troop carriers to prominence in the Pacific war. Operating from Port Moresby into remote airfields such as Wau, which had an elevation of 3300 feet, an incline of one foot in twelve, and a crescent of 7000-foot mountains at its far end,[9] the 22nd dropped tons of supplies and equipment to the beleagured Aussie troops. The flying routes were hazardous, not only because of enemy aircraft, but of nature itself. Crossing the Owen Stanleys was no easy task for the heavily-loaded troop carriers. For them there was only one negotiable air pass through the peaks — a narrow twisting gap between 5000 and 7000 feet. The high peaks were often hidden in clouds, and rain and mist would hang over the pass and trail, down to the foothills. This was "The Hump." From it came some new words into the vocabulary of the average American; even today we hear of flying "the hump."[10] Other words crept in, too — words like "the forty and eight freight car," "the biscuit bomber," and "the bully beef express."[11] The Aussies coined the "Biscuit Bomber" and the "Bully Beef Express" as expressions to designate the supply-drop troop carriers.





The men who flew the transports crossed "the Hump" from six to ten times a day. They often flew in formation, as many as nine to twelve ships protected by fighter cover. In the early months ot 1942, this fighter escort consisted of U. S. and Australian P-40s and P-39s.[12] Australia's crack 75th R. A. A. F. Squadron was notable in its support prior to U. S. units being deployed in the conflict.[13] Between 18 and 25 September 1942, the 21st and 22nd Troop Carrier Squadrons[14] transported 4000 fully-equipped men of the U. S. 32nd Division from Brisbane and Townesville to Port Moresby. The transports then flew them into action against the Japanese.[15] In this first mass transportation of troops and supplies, every type of plane was used, including some bombers which were undergoing repairs. The troop carriers hauled over 500, 000 pounds of cargo per day, the record day being over 700, 000 pounds.[16]

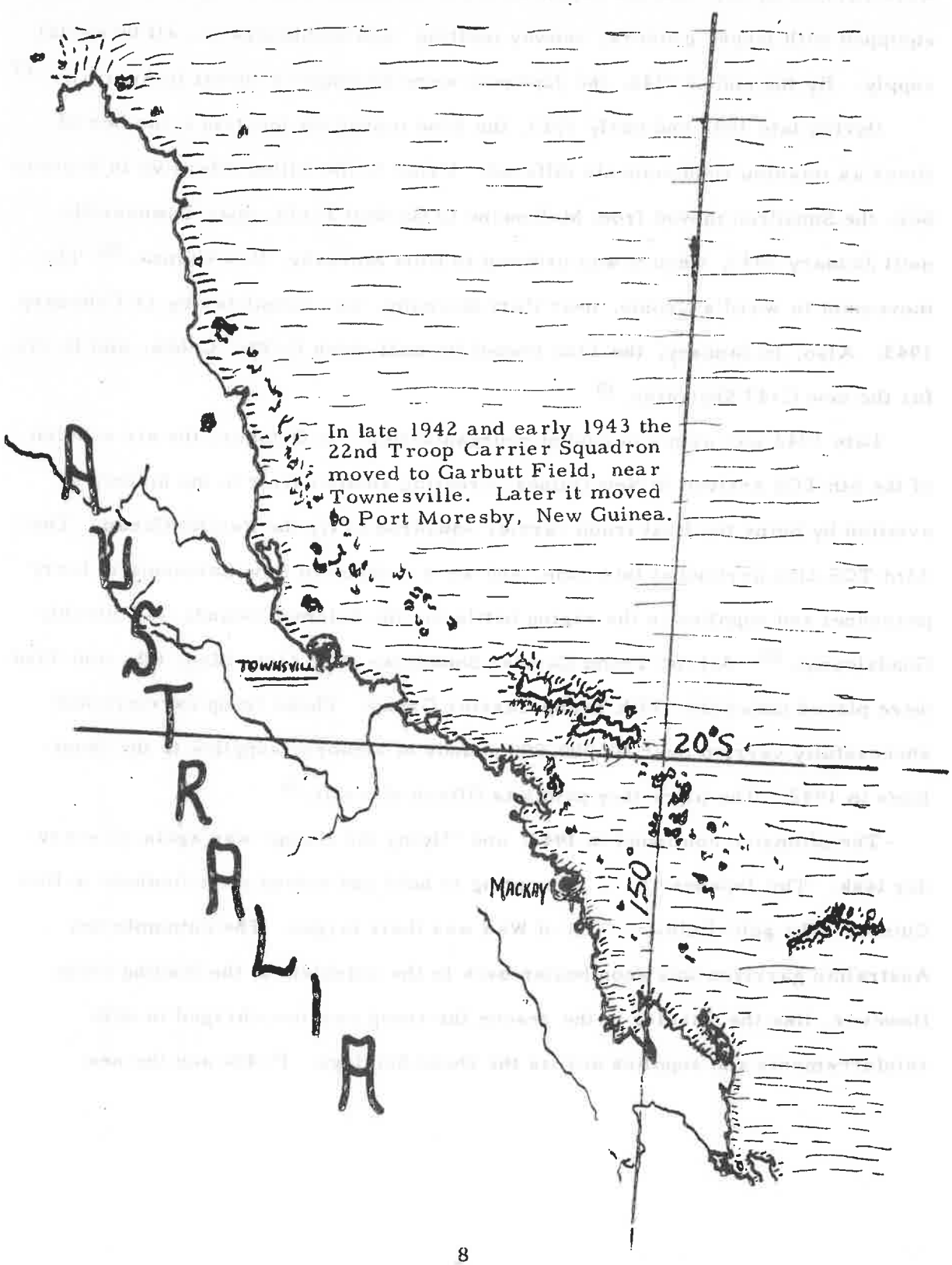
Low level techniques and troop/cargo drops were gradually being developed during this period. With the Allied counter-offensive in operation by late 1942, the troop carriers were solely responsible for supplying the ground forces. When Kokoda fell into Australian nands in November 1942, larger quantities of supplies

were carried by air, and the Japanese found themselves pitted against an enemy equipped with jeeps, graders, runway matting and bulldozers --- all by aerial supply. By the end of 1942, the Japanese were no longer a threat to Australia. [17]

During late 1942 and early 1943, the 22nd moved its location a number of times as mission requirements differed. Prior to the Allied offensive in September, the Squadron moved from Melbourne to Garbutt Field, near Townesville until January 1943, when it was ordered to Port Moresby, New Guinea. [18] The movement to Ward's Drome, near Port Moresby, was completed by 14 February 1943. Also, in January, the 22nd traded its well-worn C-39s, C-60s, and B-17s for the new C-47 Skytrains. [19]

Late 1942 was also a period of reorganization. In October, the air echelon of the 6th TCS arrived in New Guinea, creating another first in the history of aviation by being the first troop carrier squadron to fly the Pacific Ocean. The 33rd TCS also arrived at this time, and were delayed in New Caledonia to ferry personnel and supplies in the raging battle for the Solomon Islands --- notably Guadalcanal. [20] All the Troop Carrier Squadrons, the 21st, 22nd, 6th, and 33rd, were placed under the 374th Troop Carrier Group. These troop carriers had successfully carried over 40,000,000 pounds of airborne supplies to the front lines in 1942. The price they paid was fifteen aircraft. [21]

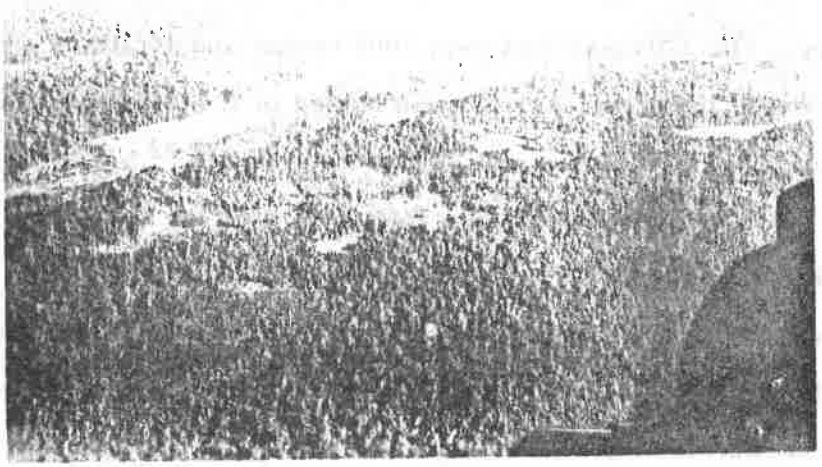
The offensive continued in 1943, and "flying the Hump" was again an everyday task. The Japanese were attempting to hold and extend their foothold in New Guinea. The gold-fields airport of Wau was their target. The outnumbered Australian garrison was soon beaten back to the outskirts of the landing strip. However, like the Cavalry to the rescue, the troop carries charged in with reinforcements and supplies across the Owen Stanleys. P-40s and the new


In late 1942 and early 1943 the 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron moved to Garbutt Field, near Townesville. Later it moved to Port Moresby, New Guinea.
AUSTRALIA
TOWNSVILLE
MACKAY
20°S
150°

P-38s flew top cover for the continuous stream of "Bully Beef Bombers." Wau held. The Australian 17th Brigade, aided by troop carriers, had turned near defeat into victory. The Japanese lost over 1000 troops and 40 attack aircraft in one day; in three days, the troop carriers had hauled in 1, 140, 000 pounds of personnel and equipment with the loss of only three aircraft.[22] Wau was the key to New Guinea. The Allied offensive again rolled on, with the battles for Lae, Nadzab, and Biak yet to come.

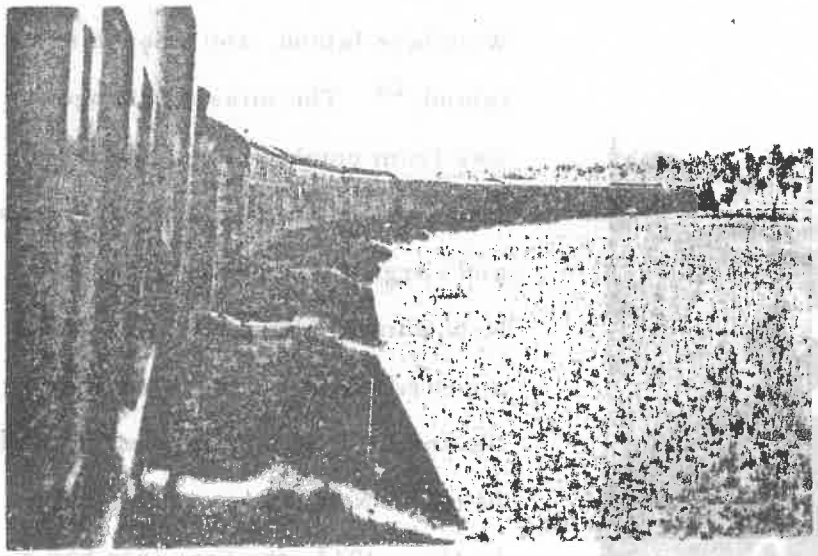
The techniques of the air war were still being learned. As troop and cargo drops were developed, problems concerning the New Guinea jungles arose. Generally, the selection of drop areas depended on the character of the terrain. The flat-topped kunai grass ridges offered the best type of drop area, and allowed the aircraft to fly at low altitude and lower airspeeds. Many of the drop areas were on mountain sides, or in valleys, and had to be cleared by hand. An example of a treacherous area was the drop zone between Iorabaiwa ridge and Kokoda: aircraft had to fly over a 4000 foot ridge and drop into a valley at 100mph, side-slip from one side of the gorge to the other at tree-top level, then climb out at 4200 feet, all in a short distance.[23] Drops were generally made flying at 300 feet and 120mph. Many items were just thrown out of the aircraft, but the troops on the ground usually managed to recover from 85 to 90 per cent of the goods.[24] These primitive forms of airdrop with some refinements made during 1942 were to continue through the war. The battle for Wau had proven the capability of aerial resupply.

Lae was next to fall. The Allies began a two-pronged attack on the Japanese stronghold, feinting a full-scale attack on Salamaua and hitting Lae when the Japanese moved to defend Salamaua. Nadzab airstrip was the key to this



Wau Airfield

Wau Under Attack



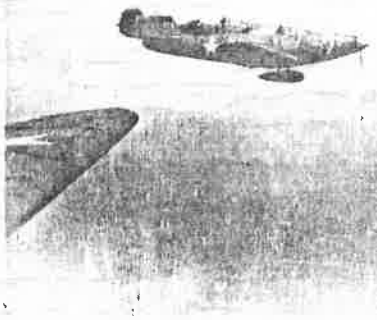
ration, and the field was taken by Australian paratroopers. Within three hours after the capture of Nadzab, a steady flow of troop carriers landed the Australian 7th Division. In the first twenty days of September 1943, 2000 planeloads of men and supplies had been airlifted to Nadzab.[25] Using Nadzab as their operation field, the troop carriers hauled over 41,000,000 pounds of cargo in October 1943, or an average of 1,333,000 pounds per day.[26] The history of other battles is similar --- Biak, Finschafen, New Britain, Cape Gloucester --- the troop carriers were a major part of battlefield plans and operations, and the 22nd a vital part of the troop carriers.

As 1943 came to a close, the Allies were a few steps closer to final victory; the Japanese were in full retreat. The 22nd TCS had already earned itself two Distinguished Unit Citations for its action over Papua (July 1942 - January 1943) and in New Guinea (Jan-Feb 1943).[27]

Then, in October 1943, the 22nd returned to Garbutt Field at Townesville, Australia, and a change in the mission. The "goonies" of the 22nd flew from Townesville to Horn Island in northern Australia to Sydney in the south. Cargo flights went daily to Port Moresby, Fall River, Lae, Nadzab, Gasep, Finschafen,

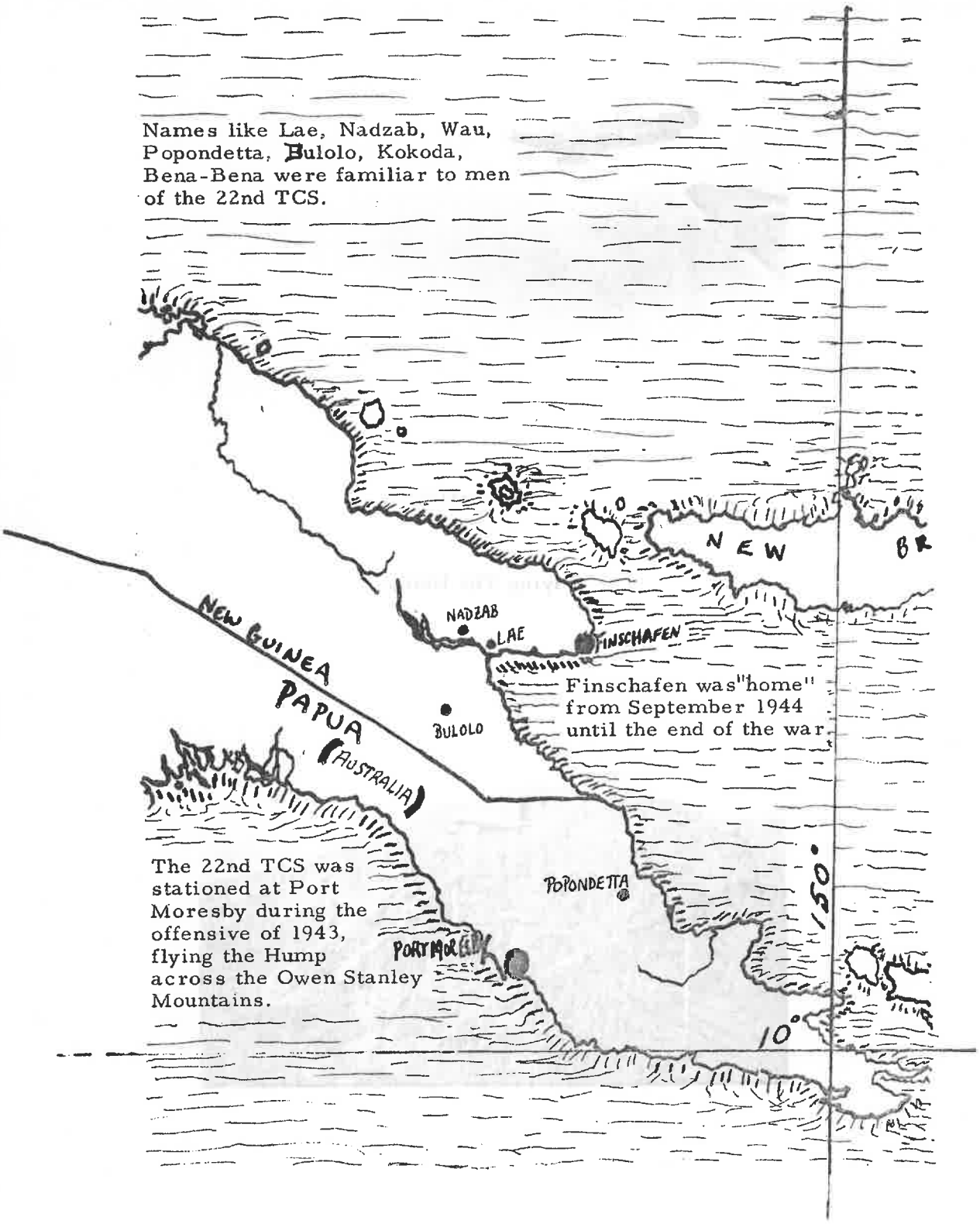
Dobedura, Goodenough Island, Woodlark Island, and Toberland Island.[28] The mission change was from combat cargo and troop drops to shuttling service of troops and cargo between Australia and New Guinea. Scheduled runs first appeared as the 22nd began making "R and R" flights from the forward bases in New Guinea to Australia. In May, 1944, the Squadron had a detachment of sixteen airplanes set up at Lae airfield to carry on the "R and R," personnel, and cargo missions as the front expanded northward from New Guinea.[29] Although the work load was quite heavy during this period, the 22nd maintained its "can do" record by flying each aircraft 160 hours and maintaining an 89 per cent in-commission rate during July 1944. At that time the Squadron had twenty C-47s, fifty-two rated officers and 240 enlisted men. Pilots flew an average of 120 hours in July 1944.[30]

On the move again in September 1944, the 22nd returned to Finschafen, New Guinea.[31] Operations followed the ever-expanding front as Allied forces rolled back the Japanese. Regular runs were beginning throughout the Indonesian islands and Australia. The Allies were already knocking on the back door of the Philippines, and on 20 October 1944, Leyte once again saw American troops. Between



"Escort!"

Flying The Hump


Names like Lae, Nadzab, Wau, Popondetta, Bulolo, Kokoda, Bena-Bena were familiar to men of the 22nd TCS.
NEW
NADZAB
LAE
FINSCHAFEN
Finschafen was "home" from September 1944 until the end of the war.
NEW GUINEA
PAPUA
(AUSTRALIA)
BULOLO
POPONDETTA
PORT MORESBY
The 22nd TCS was stationed at Port Moresby during the offensive of 1943, flying the Hump across the Owen Stanley Mountains.
150°
10°

October 1944 and February 1945, the 22nd moved cargo, troops and courier goods between Australia and the islands.

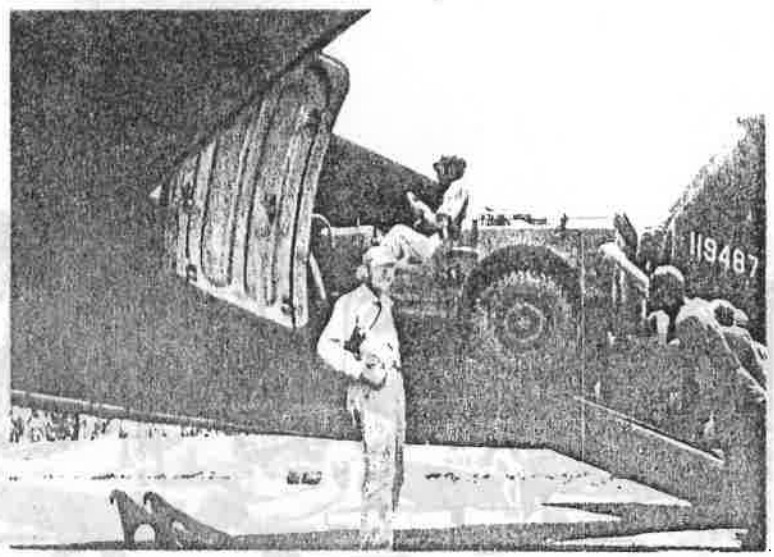
Clark Field became American again on 25 January 1945, and U.S. troops entered Manila on 3 February.[35] With Clark Field reopened, troop carriers took over the duty of providing supplies of food, ammunition and gasoline from other points in the Philippines. Air supply was critical because Manila harbor could not be used at first due to hundreds of sunken ships in the harbor and the destruction of port areas.[33] Bataan was next, and then Corregidor on 14 and 15 February 1945. The circle had been completed; those who fought so long and hard there in 1941 and early 1942 would have thought it impossible that Corregidor could be breached in 55 minutes.[34] It was done --- by paratroopers --- delivered by troop carriers.

One of the most noteworthy achievements of 1945 occurred on 20 and 21 May, when the 22nd landed at Libby Field in the midst of a fierce battle for control of the strategic airstrip. In those two days, the troop carriers airlifted 343 wounded, even though ground action was only 200 yards away. For this action, the 22nd was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation.[35]

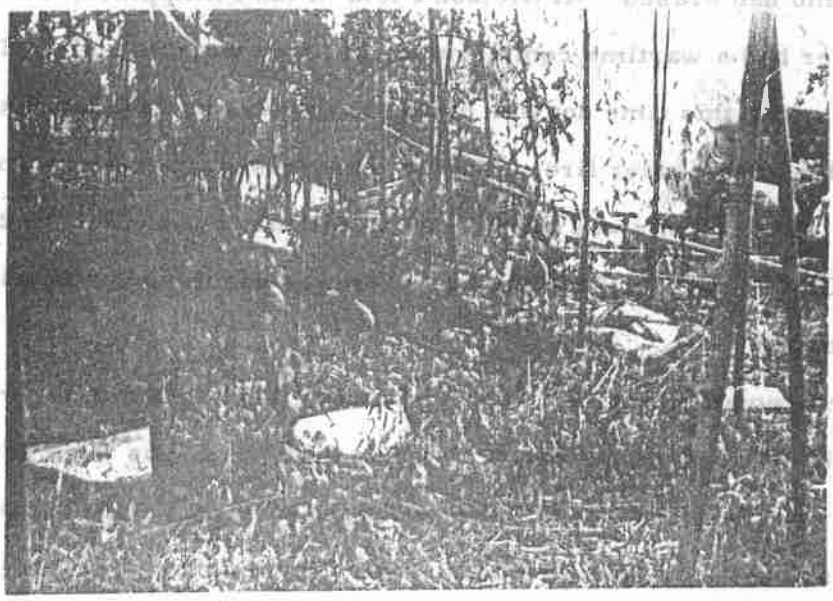
The "old workhorse of the air" --- the Gooney Bird --- was being replaced by the C-46 Commando, a much larger airplane than the C-47. It could carry twice the cargo

(10,000 pounds) and up to forty passengers.[36] By August 1945, the 22nd was re-equipped with brand new Commandos.[37] Places with names such as Biak, Leyte, Lingayen, Mindoro, San Mariano, and Manila saw the C-46s of the 22nd. Operating out of Finschafen until August 1945, the 22nd moved to Nielson Field, near Manila, Philippines.[38]

The invasion of Japan looked like a costly one, and it looked like troop carriers were to have a large part in it. In late 1945, all that remained in the Pacific were outlying islands held by the Japanese, and the main home islands of Japan. The island-hopping campaign continued. It looked like the same thing all over again --- troop carriers swooping low to drop ammunition to troops dug in against the enemy --- beachheads supplied by air --- landings on improvised coral strips or on the side of mountains --- carrying the always-grateful wounded back to hospitals, away from the war. It looked like the same thing all over again --- the cheers and smiling faces of our boys as they watched the Biscuit Bomber or the Bully Beef Express send lunch by parachute --- the struggle for altitude to evade enemy fire and rapidly-rising land --- the thrill of formation after formation of troop carriers streaming in on target with loads of airborne fighting men. It looked like the same thing all over again. But it was not. Two blasts signaled the dawn of the Atomic Age, and it was all over.



They Braved The Worst --- Most Made It, A Few Did Not ---



CHAPTER TWO

POST BELLUM PERIOD

As suddently as it had all begun, it ended. The atomic bomb had convinced the Japanese that further resistance was foolish. The bomb had also saved many American lives --- those who would have had to wrest the home islands of Japan from their defenders. And on the scores of widely-scattered airstrips throughout the South Pacific sat line upon line of transport aircraft, waiting for that mission which the bomb had erased. At Nielson Field in the Philippines, the C-46s of the 22nd no longer had a wartime commitment, but they were not idle. Troops were still carried, only this time not into battle; cargo was hauled, but not dropped into inaccessible areas under fire. And the omnipresent courier cargo was always around. . . . But the war was over, and the specific mission of the 22nd TCS was at an end. On 31 January 1946, the Squadron was deactivated at Nielson Field.[1] An era had ended.

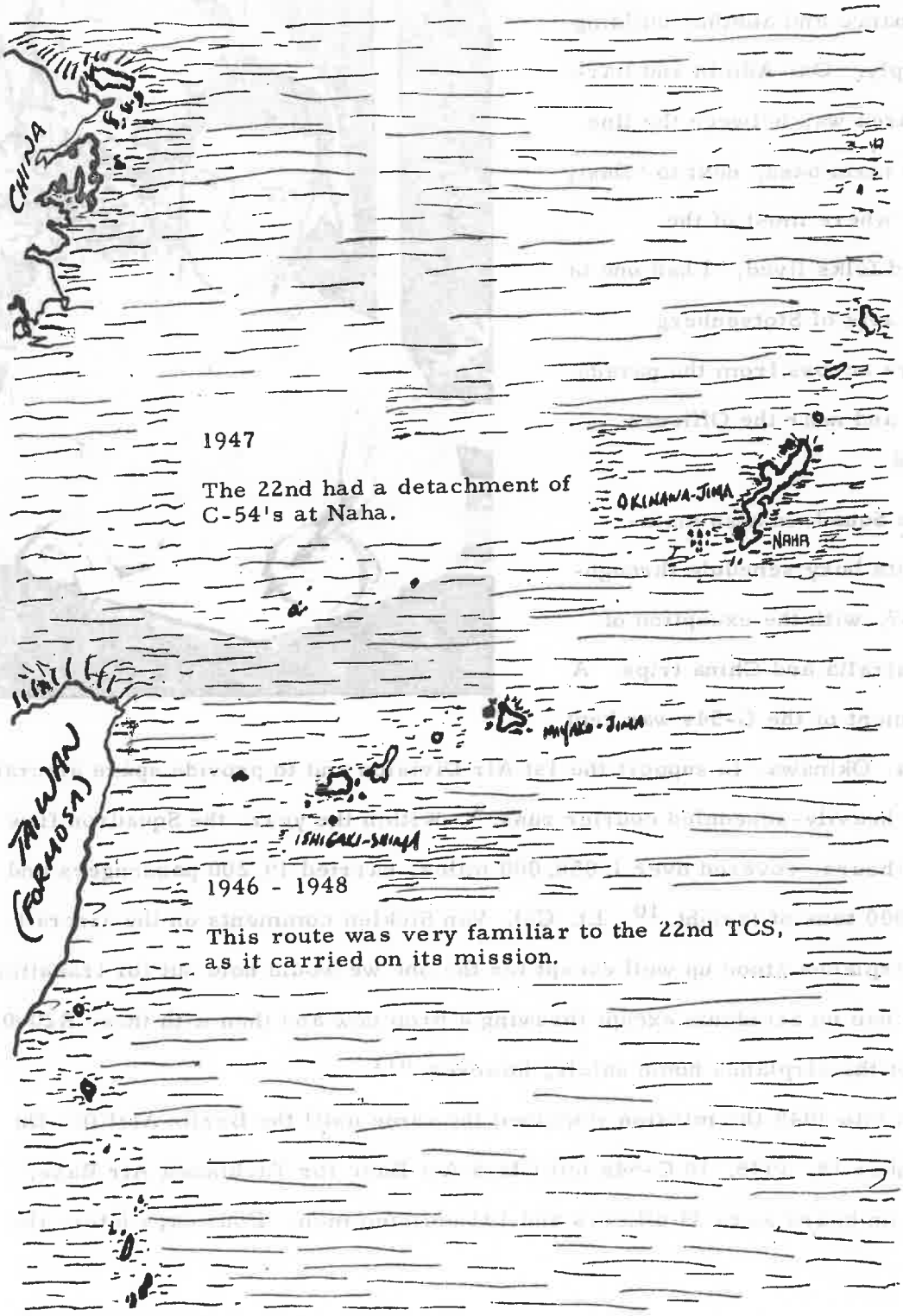
The 22nd remained inactive until 15 October 1946, when it was reactivated at Nichols Field, Philippine Islands.[2] By this time the C-46s were being replaced by the newer and larger C-54. These two types of aircraft constituted the Squadron's strength for moving troops, mail, and high-priority cargo over regularly scheduled courier runs.[3] The missions were all over the Southern

From 1946-1948, the 22nd TCS operated from Nielson, Nichols, and Clark, maintaining courier and cargo service in the Philippines and also flying to Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, China, and Australia.

Pacific as well as north of Japan. Courier flights ran twice a day between Manila, Naha, and Tokyo; once a day from Manila, Naha, Tokyo, to Tachikawa; two per week to Guam; one per week to Hickam; one a week to Biak, Brisbane, or Darwin; a few to Bangkok, Singapore, and Java; as well as regular trips to Formosa, Shanghai, Peiping, and Nanking, China.[4] Most of these runs were handled by the C-54s. The C-46s were usually held for the shorter runs around the Philippines.[5]

In late 1946, aircraft of the 22nd averaged 150 hours flying time a month, with the highest month being 180 hours. None of the crew members had less than 100 hours per month.[6] Throughout the period, the fly-safe record of the 22nd was accident free. Moving again, the 22nd made its home at Clark Field after 23 April 1947.[7]

Lt. Col. Norton Van Sicklen, Squadron commander during 1947, recalls the post-war years: ". . . By this time we were crewing aircraft with officers --- practically no enlisted men left . . . pretty skeletonized because of the troops being rotated to the States to return to civilian life. . . . Our new facilities were tops at Clark. We were just north of Base Ops jumbo quonset on the west side of the field in a jumbo quonset of our own. We had four C-54 nose docks for



1947

The 22nd had a detachment of C-54's at Naha.

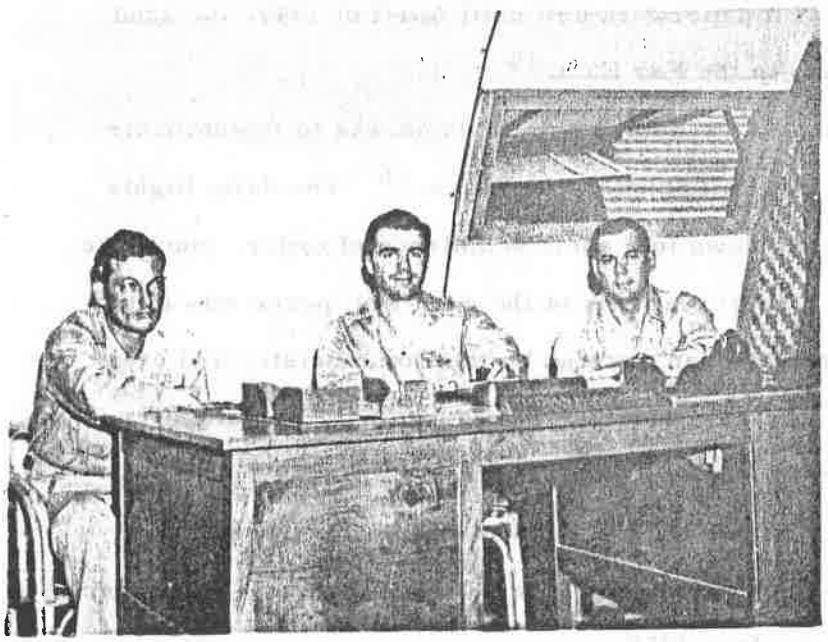
1946 - 1948

This route was very familiar to the 22nd TCS, as it carried on its mission.

maintenance and another building for supply. Our Admin and Barracks area was between the line and the main base, next to "Dusty Acres" where most of the married folks lived. I had one of the old sets of Stotsenberg quarters across from the parade ground and near the Officers Club."[8]

The Squadron also maintained its busy schedule throughout 1947, with the exception of the Australia and China trips. A detachment of the C-54s was kept at Naha, Okinawa, to support the 1st Air Division and to provide spare aircraft for the heavily-scheduled courier runs.[9] Within the year, the Squadron flew 10,900 hours, covered over 1,850,000 miles, carried 19,200 passengers and over 2000 tons of freight.[10] Lt. Col. Van Sicklen comments on the aircraft: "The airplanes stood up well except for the one we would hold out for transition. But we had no accidents except throwing a prop now and then with those R2000-11s. Still got the airplanes home safely, however."[11]

On into 1948 the mission remained the same until the Berlin Airlift. On September 18, 1948, 10 C-54s left Clark Air Base for Tachikawa Air Base, Japan; on board were 39 officers and 131 enlisted men. Four days later, the



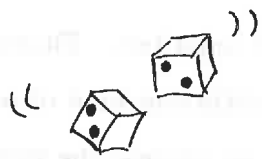
twelve C-54s of the 22nd left "Tachi" for Kelly Field, Texas, arriving there on 27 September after the long ocean hop. Then on from Kelly to Westover, to Harmon, Lajes, and Wiesbaden. On 3 October, 1948, seven aircraft of the 22nd landed at Wiesbaden; the last C-54 arrived on 8 October, and the movement was completed. [12]

The 22nd remained in Germany through November 1948 and flew supplies to the beleaguered city of Berlin. It was a new kind of war --- the cold war. Berlin was strategic; it needed strategic supplies. Those supplies were food, clothing, and civilian goods; this was a different kind of war --- the war for men's minds, and the fight was carried on against the people of Berlin. The Soviet Union wanted another propaganda victory with the "liberation" of Berlin from the West. That victory failed to materialize. Berlin was saved from Communist domination. The mainstay in the defeat of the Soviet threat was transport air power coupled with the determination of the Berliners not to knuckle under. For their part in this humanitarian campaign, the members of the 22nd earned the United Nations Medal for Humane Action. [13]

A surprise awaited the on-the-go "Double Dueces" as the Squadron was transferred to Tachikawa Air Base, Japan, in November 1948, without personnel and

equipment.[14] Existing only as a paperwork unit until April of 1949, the 22nd then resumed an active mission in the Far East.[15]

Flying from its home station, Tachikawa, its mission was to maintain airlift between Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Korea.[16] The daily flights and the schedules began to settle down into some semblance of order, much like that of a commerical airline. There was talk of the good life; peace was in the air even though China had recently been overrun by the Communists, and even though the small countries of central Europe were undergoing "revolutions" which gave evidence of further things to come. But in the Pacific, "peace" prevailed. Another war was unthinkable since the advent of the atomic bomb. And so life went on for the airmen in America's far-flung outposts --- the peacetime Air Force. But then came June 1950.



CHAPTER THREE

KOREA!

It all began on a summer's afternoon. What had once been the "Guns of August" became the guns of June. On one of those peaceful days when the world was basking in the sunlight of God's goodness, a bugle shrieked and the world was no longer at peace. From the beginning of war in June of 1950 until the last volley of rifle fire echoed and died, the 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron was deeply involved in the Korean War. At first, the Republic of Korea forces could not stop the adamant advance from North Korea. The Communists surged down the Korean peninsula. Americans became aware of places with names like Taegu, Seoul, Wonju, Andong, and Pusan. It was here, at the famed Pusan Perimeter that the invading masses were finally halted.

During those early days of unglamourous defeat and retreat transport air power again showed its effectiveness. At the outbreak of war in Korea, the 374th Troop Carrier Wing (TCW) at Tachikawa Air Base, Japan, was the only air transport unit in the Far East.[1] The two squadrons at Tachi, the 22nd and the 6th, flew their C-54's to evacuate civilians, missionaries, diplomats and military advisors back to Japan. The missions were hazardous. All crew members

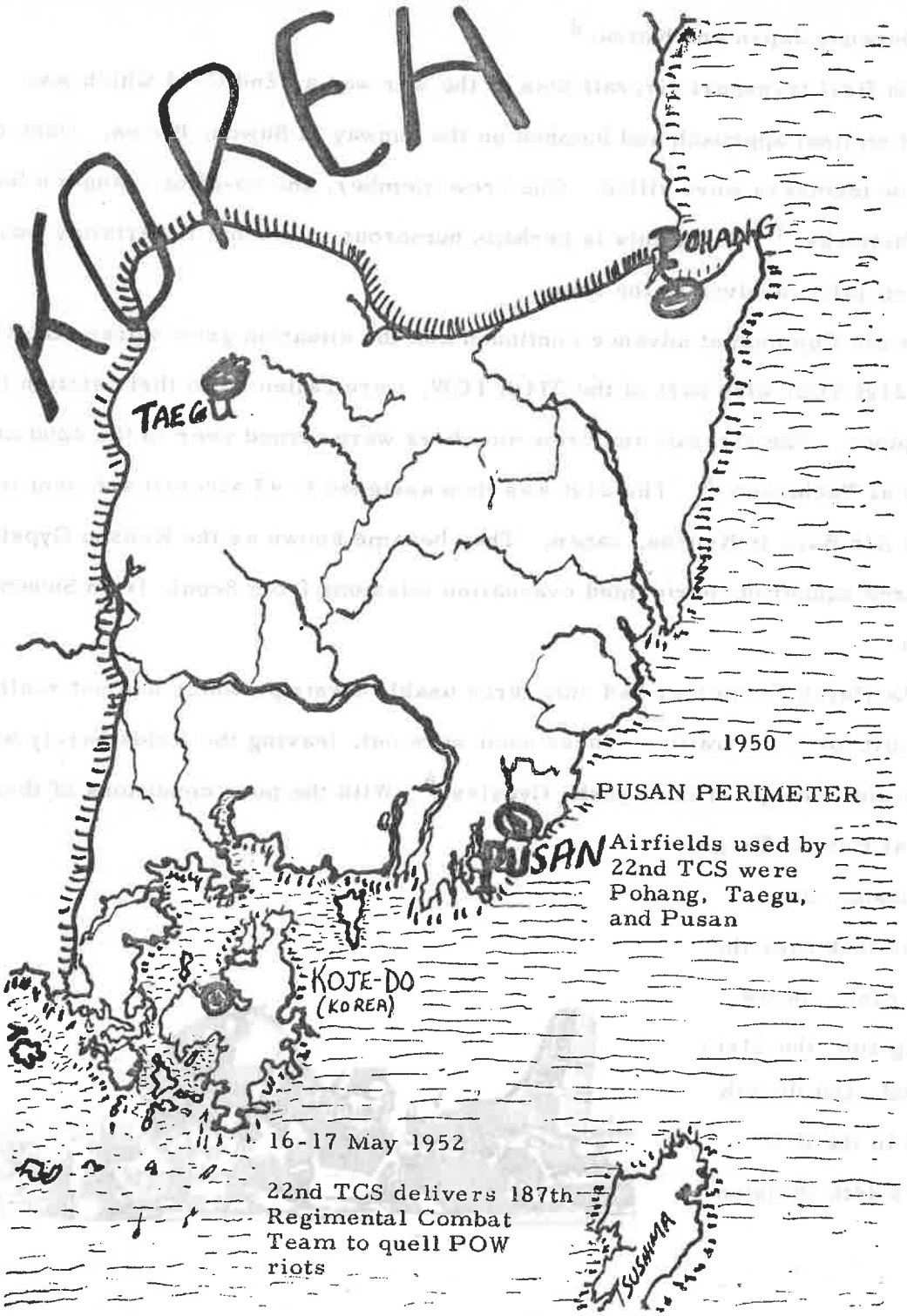
APRIL 1949
The 22nd TCS found a new home — TACHIKAWA.
It was from here in 1950 that the 22nd carried on airlift and air evac to and from Korea.
HONSHU
(JAPAN)
TACHIKAWA
KYOTO
OSAKA

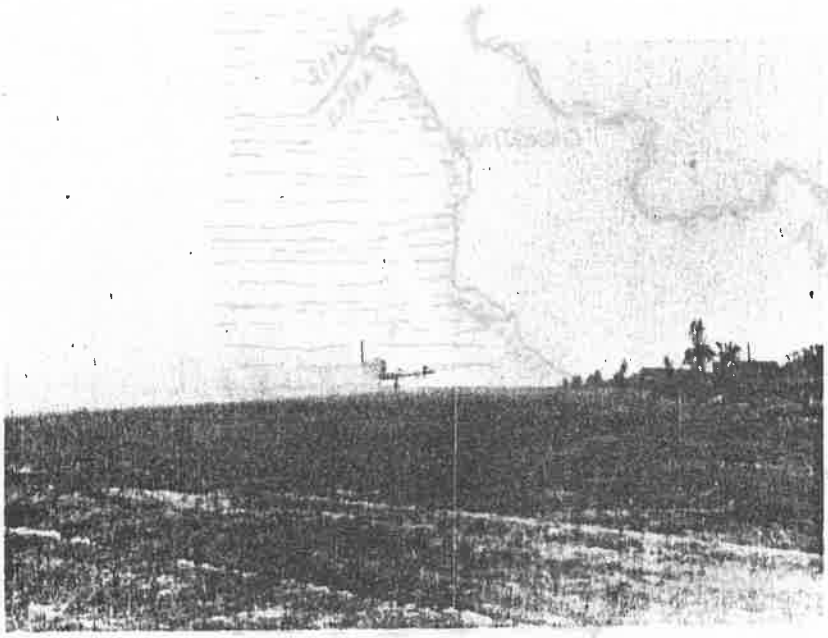
carried arms and survival gear. USAF fighters provided cover for the transports between Japan and Korea.[2]

The first transport aircraft loss of the war was a 22nd C-54 which was strafed on final approach and bombed on the runway at Suwon, Korea. None of the crew members were killed. One crew member, the co-pilot, caught a bullet in the buttocks.[3] Today this is perhaps humorous to us, but it certainly was not to the co-pilot involved at the time.

As the Communist advance continued and the situation grew worse, the C-54's of the 21st TCS, also part of the 374th TCW, were called from their station in the Philippines. The aircraft and crew members were turned over to the 22nd and the 6th at Tachikawa.[4] The 21st was then assigned C-47 aircraft and sent to Ashiya Air Base in Kyushu, Japan. They became known as the Kyushu Gypsies.[5] The three squadrons performed evacuation missions from Seoul, from Suwon, and Taejon.

The Pusan Perimeter had only three usable airstrips which had not really been built for C-54 traffic. These soon wore out, leaving the fields barely usable for the old Gooneys of the Kyushu Gypsies.[6] With the poor conditions of these fields at Pusan, Taegu, and Pohang, the Gypsies took over the Korea runs. In the last big run, the 21st, the 22nd, and the 6th moved in the U. S. Army's 24th Division


KOREA
POHANG
TAEGU
PUSAN
KOJE-DO
(KOREA)
SUSHIMA
1950
PUSAN PERIMETER
Airfields used by 22nd TCS were Pohang, Taegu, and Pusan
16-17 May 1952
22nd TCS delivers 187th Regimental Combat Team to quell POW riots

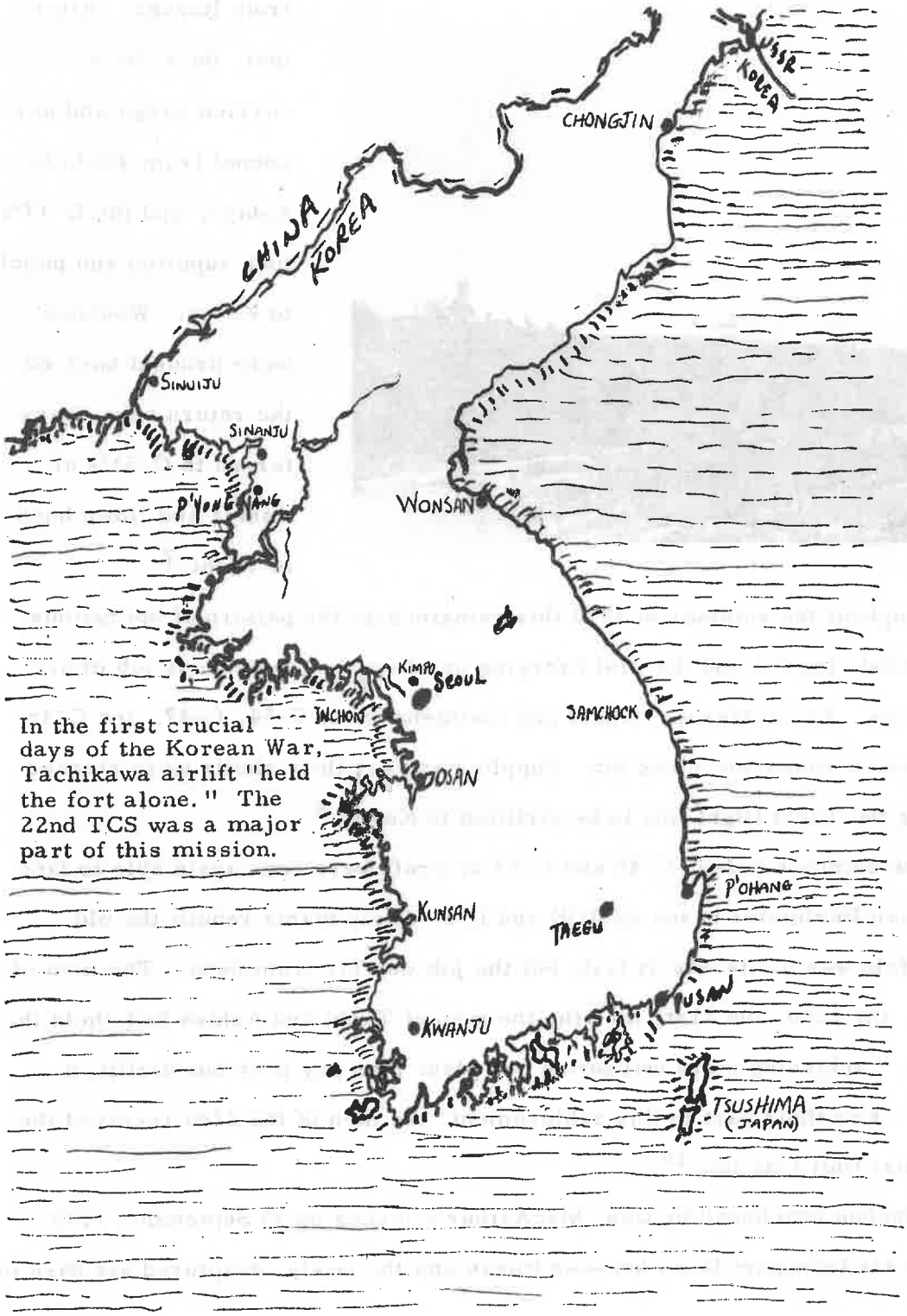


from Itazuke. After that, the C-54's carried cargo and personnel from Tachi to Ashiya, and the C-47's took supplies and people to Korea. Wounded were brought back on the return trip, transferred to C-54's at Ashiya and flown back to Tachi.[7]

Throughout the summer of 1950 this remained as the pattern of operations, with the 22nd, the 6th and the 21st carrying on alone the tremendous job of airlift to Korea. At Tachikawa, repair and maintenance of C-54, C-47, and C-46 aircraft was a round-the-clock job. Supplies and artillery shells were stacked high along the Tachi flight line to be airlifted to Korea.[8]

As the summer ended, C-46 and C-54 aircraft were once again able to land at the Pusan Perimeter bases as ROK and U. S. Army teams rebuilt the old strips. Help was on its way at last, but the job was far from done. The men of the 374th, the 22nd, the 21st, the 6th, the men of Tachi and Ashiya had "held the fort alone," achieving more utilization per plane than any previous airlift in history.[9] For their part in this achievement, the men of the 22nd received the Presidential Unit Citation.[10]

The Inchon beachhead by Gen. MacArthur's forces on 15 September 1950 opened up air transport lanes between Pusan and the newly recaptured air base of



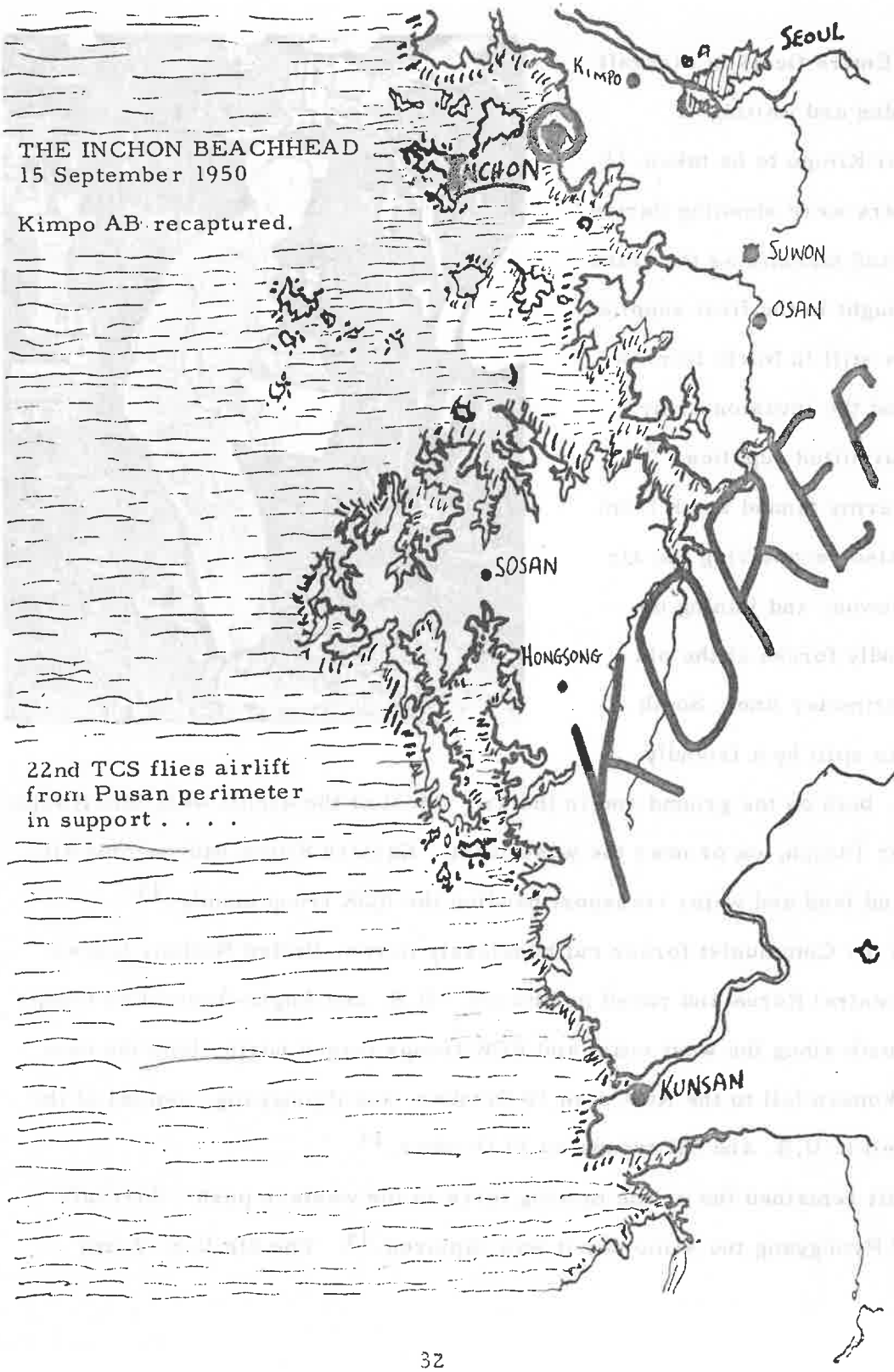
In the first crucial days of the Korean War, Tachikawa airlift "held the fort alone." The 22nd TCS was a major part of this mission.

Kimpo. Entire fleets of aircraft were loaded and waiting at Ashiya for Kimpo to be taken.[11] Red snipers were shooting during landings and takeoffs as the transports brought in the first supplies. Seoul was still in North Korean hands, and the invasion army lived on airlifted supplies.[12]

The army fanned south from Inchon, also recapturing the air base at Suwon, and joining up with friendly forces at the old Pusan Perimeter line. South Korea was split by a friendly corridor, both on the ground and in the air. Most of the airlift went into Kimpo, Suwon, or Taejon, on or near the west coast. Eastern Korea had no good airstrips, and land and water transport handled the ROK troop supply.[13]

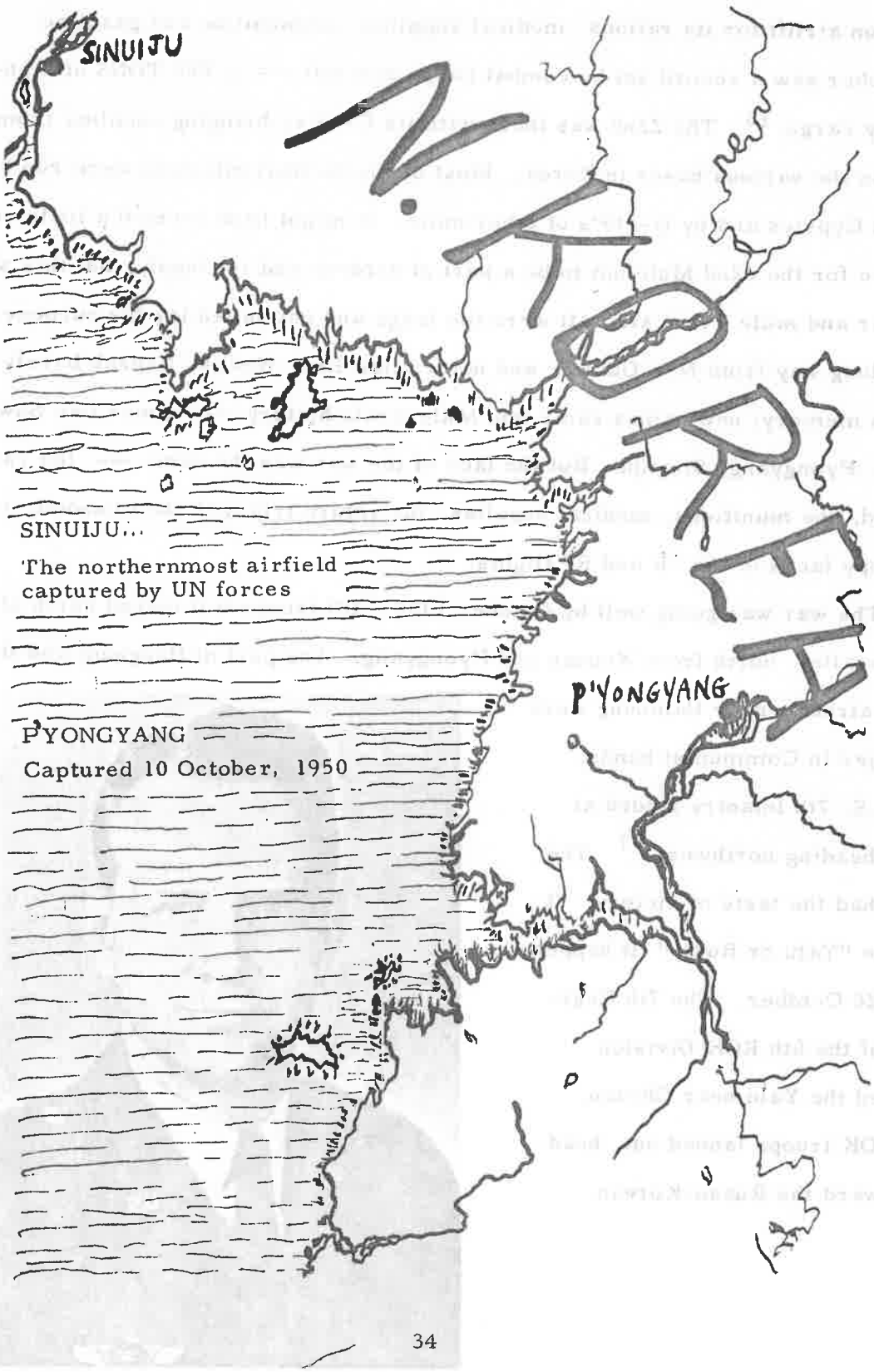
With the Communist forces cut hopelessly in two, United Nations forces cleared central Korea and raced northward. U.S. and Anglo-Australian troops pushed north along the west coast and ROK troops forged north along the east coast. Wonsan fell to the ROK's on 10 October, and Pyongyang, capital of the North, fell to U.S. and UN troops on 19 October.[14]

Airlift remained the prime moving force in the western push. Aircraft landed at Pyongyang the same day it was captured.[15] The 8th U.S. Army


THE INCHON BEACHHEAD
15 September 1950
Kimpo AB recaptured.
22nd TCS flies airlift from Pusan perimeter in support . . . .
SEOUL
KIMPO
INCHON
SUWON
OSAN
SOSAN
HONGSONG
KOREA
KUNSAN

relied on airlift for its rations medical supplies ammunition and gasoline. 26 October saw a record set by combat cargo aircraft --- 2,000 TONS of high-priority cargo.[16] The 22nd was there with its C-54's, bringing supplies from Japan to the various bases in Korea. Most of the tactical missions were run by the Kyushu Gypsies and by C-119's of other units. It might have seemed a little out-of-place for the 22nd Mule not to be a part of airdrop and re-supply, but this was a new war and Mule Train aircraft were too large and not suited for the purpose. It was a long way from New Guinea, and names like Lae, Wewak, Nadzab barely hung in memory; new names came into Mule Train history --- names like Suwon, Kimpo, Pyongyang, Sinanju. But the face of the war was the same --- the cargo, the food, the munitions, medical supplies, the return trip with the wounded, and the happy faces of the "R and R" flights.

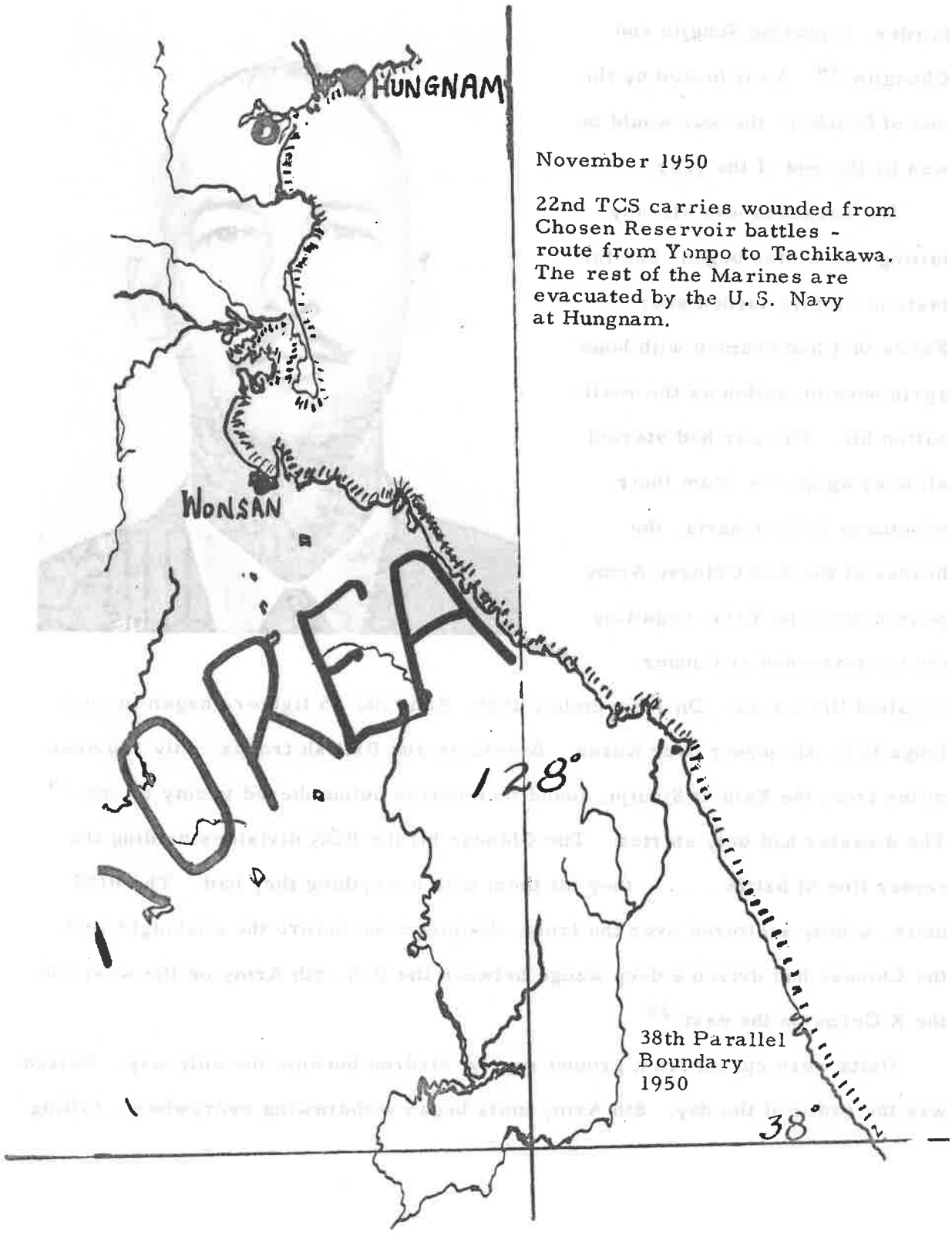
The war was going well by October 1950. UN troops had moved north of the 38th parallel, north from Wonsan and Pyongyang. The port of Hangnum and the Yonpo airstrip near Hamhung were no longer in Communist hands. The U. S. 7th Infantry landed at Iwon, heading northwest.[17] The allies had the taste of victory. It was the "Yalu or Bust." It happened on 26 October. The 7th Regiment of the 6th ROK Division reached the Yalu near Chosan. The ROK troops fanned out, heading toward the Russo-Korean


SINUIJU
NORTH
P'YONGYANG
SINUIJU...
The northernmost airfield captured by UN forces
P'YONGYANG
Captured 10 October, 1950

border, capturing Songjin and Chongjin.[18] As it looked by the end of October, the war would be won by the end of the year.

But darkness was already falling and winter began, and the taste of victory turned sour. Faces that had beamed with hope again became sullen as the realization hit. The war had started all over again --- from their sanctuary in Manchuria, the hordes of the Red Chinese Army poured over the Yalu, engulfing the overextended and under-supplied UN forces. On 1 November 1950, Red MIG-15 fighters began to challenge U.S. air power over Korea. American and British troops, only fourteen miles from the Yalu at Sinuiju, found themselves outnumbered twenty to one.[19] The disaster had only started. The Chinese hit the ROK divisions holding the center line of battle . . . . they hit them with everything they had. The ROK units, widely scattered over the front, disintegrated before the onslaught and the Chinese had driven a deep wedge between the U.S. 8th Army on the west and the X Corps on the east.[20]

Units were cut off from ground supply; airdrop became the only way. Retreat was the order of the day. 8th Army units began withdrawing everywhere, falling

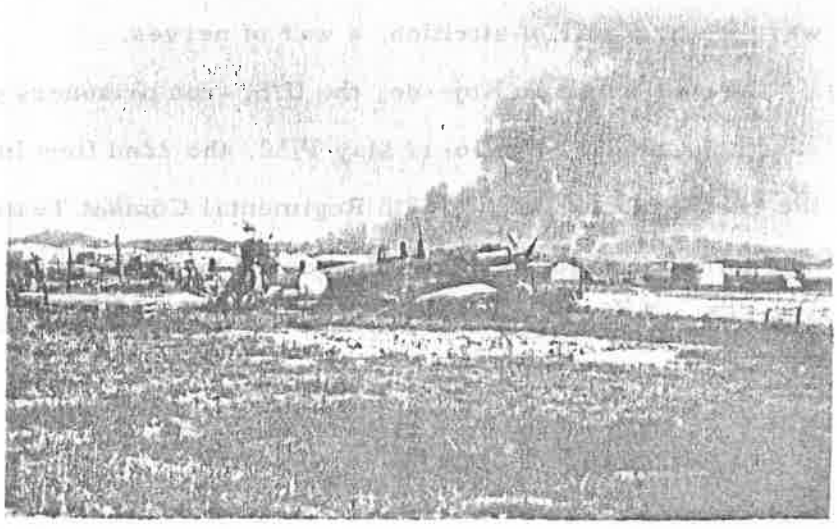


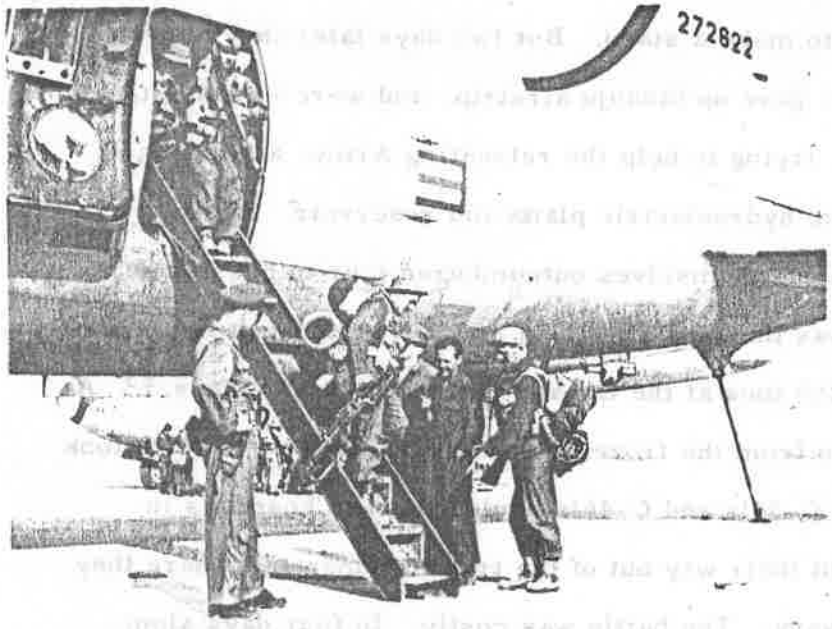
November 1950

22nd TCS carries wounded from Chosen Reservoir battles - route from Yonpo to Tachikawa. The rest of the Marines are evacuated by the U. S. Navy at Hungnam.

back to the Chongchon river to make a stand. But two days later they blew up the bridges on the Chongchon, gave up Sinanju airstrip, and were in full retreat southward.[21] The Marines, trying to help the retreating Army, attacked and captured the Chongjin (Chosen) hydroelectric plants and reservoir. Again attacking the Chinese, they found themselves outnumbered four to one and surrounded.[22] Airdrop again was the answer. C-47 and C-119 aircraft flew from Ashiya to Yonpo, dropping 1255 tons at the Chosen reservoir in nine days.[23] A makeshift airstrip was carved from the frozen soil near Hagaru-ri. C-47's took out wounded to Yonpo, where C-54's and C-46's hauled them to hospitals in Japan.[24] The Marines fought their way out of the trap to Hungnam, where they were evacuated by the U.S. Navy. The battle was costly. In four days alone, the Kyushu Gypsies had airlifted 4,700 wounded from Chosen.[25] C-54's of the 22nd aided by airlifting these wounded to Japan --- at first to Itazuke, then Itami (Osaka), and Tachikawa.[26]

The Chinese push continued. UN troops returned to places only recently taken from the Reds, only this time the march was south . . . back across the 38th parallel, back to Seoul, back to Kimpo, Suwon, and the Pusan perimeter. As 1950 came to a close, the fortunes of war in Korea had come almost full circle. Shortly after New Years 1951, the last combat cargo aircraft flew out of Kimpo and Seoul. A few days later, Suwon



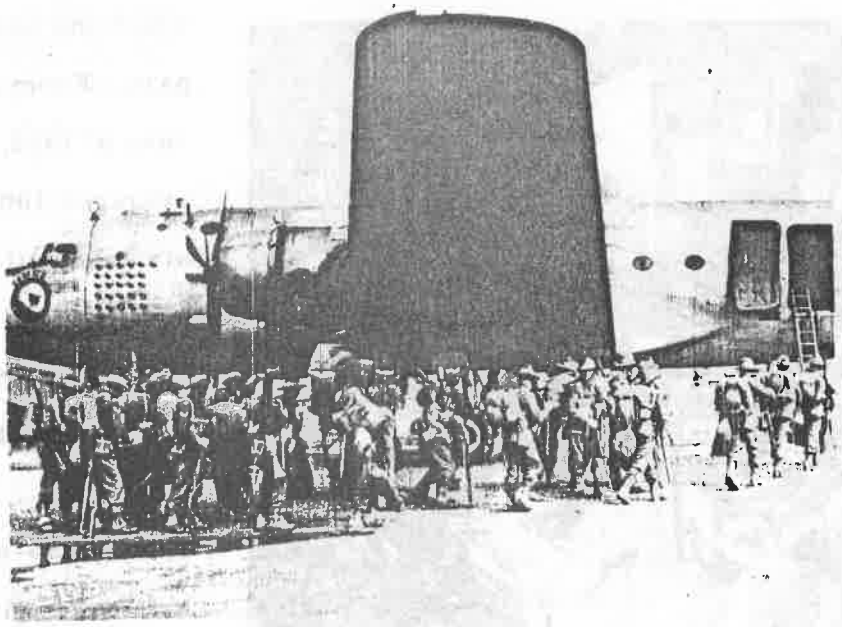


was abandoned.[27] Combat cargo aircraft were limited to operations within the old Pusan perimeter.

The UN counter-offensive in 1951 again liberated Kimpo. Airlift became important all over again: artillery shells and other ammunition were in great demand at Hoensong. The 22nd's C-54's flew 74 sorties in two days (22-23 May) to aid Hoensong; over 5,000 tons of cargo were airlifted to front line air strips within four days --- the biggest sustained airlift ever accomplished by combat cargo.[28] Guns, men, ammunition were expended throughout 1951 as the battle lines see-sawed back and forth.

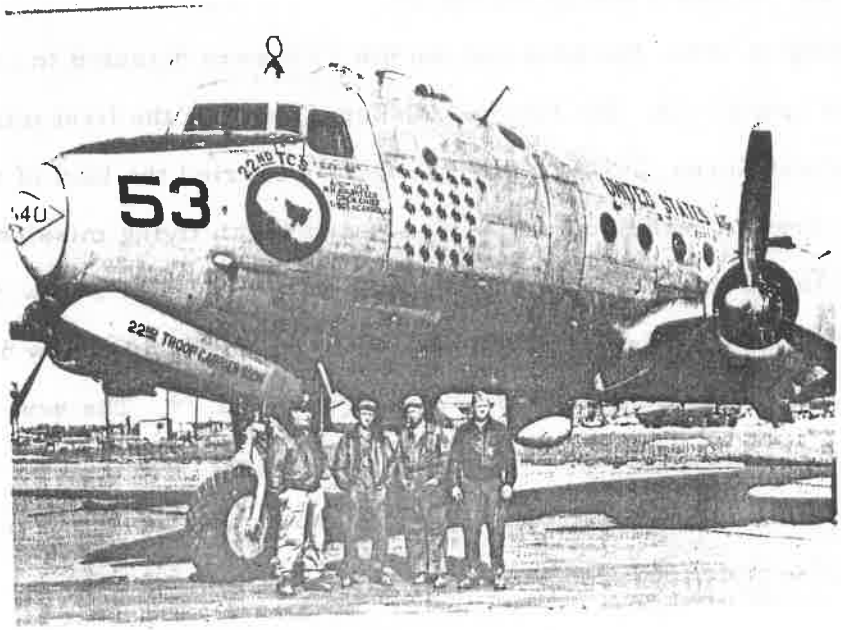
The war in Korea was becoming a stalemate by early 1952. The UN offensive had pushed the Chinese north of the 38th parallel except for the western third of Korea. There was talk of talks --- negotiations. To the fighters of the war, it was a war of attrition, a war of nerves.

Nerves broke on Koje-do, the U.S.-run prisoners of war camp holding thousands of Chinese. On 16-17 May 1952, the 22nd flew into Koje-do, delivering the "Angels from Hell," 187th Regimental Combat Team, to quell POW riots.[29] The toll of attrition is also underscored by the fact that by January 1952 over 200,000 patients had been "air evac"ed by aircraft of the 315th Air Division, of



Aussies Board A 22nd Aircraft
On Their Way To The Front

Between Missions



which the 22nd was a part. From January to June of 1952, the 22nd averaged 1000 or more air evac patients per month.[30]

In late 1951, a new aircraft touched down at Tachikawa. It was big, bulky, slab-sided, and had four engines. An Army general said it would never fly. But it did. It carried 25 tons of cargo, hauled 167 air evac patients for a new world's record, and carried 200 passengers.[31] It did all this while on an intensive tryout during the Korea airlift. It was called Globemaster II, or the C-124. It was a hint of the future.

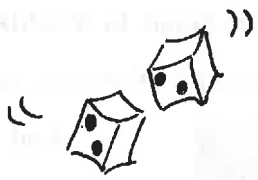
In the spring of 1952, the 22nd and the 6th TCS were directed to convert from the C-54 to the new C-124. By July the 6th Squadron flew the first mission between Tachi and Korea.[32] At first, the C-54's carried the load of airlift to Korea, but as crews checked out in the C-124 and began flying missions, the C-124 jumped to the top of the list. In December 1952, C-124's flew 390 sorties, carrying 28,000 passengers and 4700 tones of cargo; the C-54's flew 500 sorties, carrying only 10,000 passengers and 1770 tons of cargo.[33] The new "big brother" had taken over the load, especially the unusual loads: In the latter part of 1952. F-86 jets were using drop tanks at an unprecedented rate. A three-day

supply line from the U.S. to Korea was set up using the C-124. The 22nd participated in the last leg of this route, supplying the forward fighter bases. In some cases, the life span of the tip tanks from the time they left their place of manufacture until they were dropped by the fighters was eight days.[34] The Globemaster earned itself many plaudits for Korea. The 315th Air Division Report on the Korean War had this to day: "The C-124 was found to be an excellent intra-theater aircraft. . . . The introduction of the C-124 to the Korean conflict proved operationally sound since the cost per ton mile and cargo ground time were cut considerably."[35]

Airlift --- and the war --- continued. In late April of 1953, Operation Little Switch, the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners, was begun: 6,670 sick and disabled Communists were traded for 684 Allied prisoners.[36] These Allied repatriates were carried by C-124 from Seoul to Tachikawa and then sent home --- to the U.S.A., Turkey, the Philippines, Greece, and other nations.

And then on 27 July 1953, at Panmunjon, the Korean War ended at the negotiation table. It ended in a truce. This truce was followed almost immediately by Operation Big Switch, the largest exchange of prisoners in the Korean War.[37] The first C-124 load of 64 repatriates left Seoul in August.[38] Through the next few months, plane-load after plane-load of gaunt, sick repatriates were brought into Tachikawa.

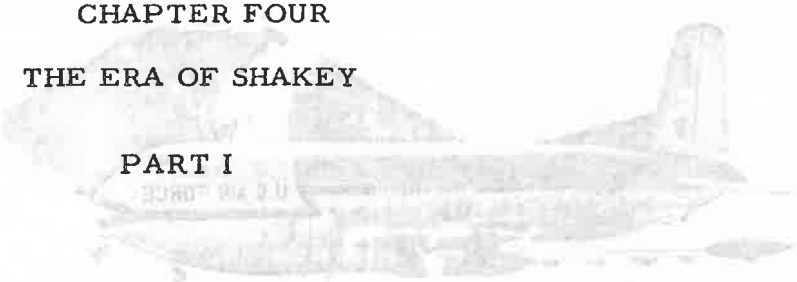
Thus it ended where it had started, at the 38th paralled. In comparison to the war that had preceded, it was a little war; but the cost was mammoth. It proved to be a defeat of sorts for Communism. . . . . But there was no real victory in Korea.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE ERA OF SHAKEY

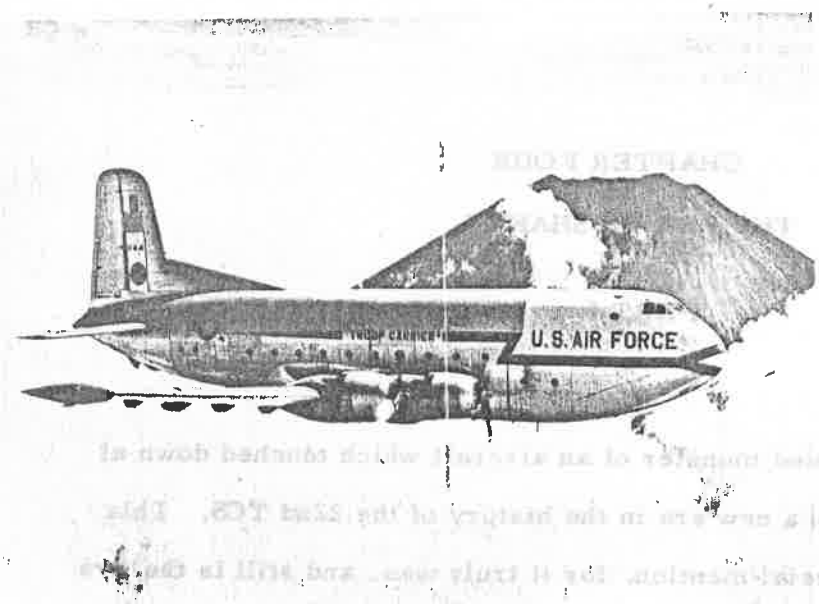
PART I



That big, bulky, slab-sided monster of an aircraft which touched down at Tachikawa in 1950 ushered in a new era in the history of the 22nd TCS. This unique airplane deserves special mention, for it truly was, and still is the Era of Shakey.

Of all the aircraft the 22nd has flown in its history, primarily two stand out. One, of course, is the old "Gooney Bird" C-47; the other, Old Shakey. Of the two, the most spectacular is Shakey. At first sight, Shakey takes your breath away: She is huge, standing 48 feet tall, measuring 130 long, and she has a wing-span of 174 feet. And she is heavy. She can take off with a gross weight of over 194,000 pounds. Her large, flat sides, small wings, and "putt-putt" engines belie her capabilities. She resembles the proverbial bumblebee --- whom scientists have deduced cannot fly due to physical impossibilities. But she does fly; she has been doing it for years --- since 1952 for the 22nd TCS.

What is her story? She is not an "original." Shakey is the outgrowth of the C-74 (Globemaster I), the first large transport airplane ordered with the specific purpose of hauling heavy ordnance. The C-74 was much like the C-54, only larger. It had a long, sleek fuselage, the "Shakey" tail, and a bubble cockpit.



Landing gear was tricycle; the loading was done high off the ground and to the aft of the wing section like the C-54. An innovation was the rear section platform elevator, found today in the C-124. The C-74 did not meet the requirements of modern ordnance, even though it showed the potential of "big plane" airlift. A study made in October 1948 during the Berlin Airlift showed that 68 C-74's could haul the 4,500 ton daily requirement of Berlin, as compared with 178 C-54's or 899 C-47's needed to fulfill the same requirement.*

The first YC-124 Globemaster II was a made over C-74 in reality. Engineers sliced the fuselage in two lengthwise and added a second story with a collapsible second floor. In this way, the main cargo compartment was 12 feet wide, 12 feet high, and 77 feet long, and could handle trucks, guns, graders, and heavy ordnance. With the second floor down, 200 troops or 127 litter patients could be carried. Another innovation was the hydraulically operated clamshell nose-doors and the folding, stowable loading ramp, making loading mobile or bulky

*Factual material on this page was taken from The Airman, Vol X, No 5, May 1966, p. 18. "Old Shakey," an article by Col. Richard W. Dorff.

items easy and from ground level. The first Shakey flew in November 1949, and she was delivered to USAF in May of 1950. Since that time, she has gone through many modifications, gaining her droop-nose radome, new engines, increased fuel capacity, and many other improvements.

Her history in performing the mission is interesting and varied. She began here in Japan with the 6th and the 22nd and those first test runs into Korea in 1952. Since then she has flown the entire world. Some of her more spectacular achievements are a fitting testimonial:*

> Japan, 1954: 500 French troops wounded in the battle of Dien Bien Phu evacuated to the United States and then on to France. **22**
>
> Lebanon, 1958: 5500 tons of cargo and 5400 troops airlifted to Beirut to keep the peace. **22**
>
> Morocco, 1960: 371,000 pounds of shelters, cots, and bedding delivered to Agadir. Refugees left homeless by earthquakes evacuated.
>
> Brazil, 1960: 50 trees, one from each state, flown from Miami to the new city of Brasilia as a good will gesture.
>
> Cambodia, 1961: Rains and floods create havoc and contaminate the drinking water. Old Shakey delivers four cranes weighing 44,380 pounds each and a D-7 Caterpillar tractor weighing 40,300 pounds. **22**
>
> British Honduras, 1961: Hurricane Hattie tears Belize to shreds. Airlift delivers mobile radio equipment, generator units, a jeep a 2 1/2 ton truck, a water trailer, and fuel for British helicopters.
>
> Egypt, 1961: Four C-124's haul 15 tons of insect killer to fight an invasion of army worms and other pests destroying the cotton crop.
>
> Tanganyika, 1962: 55,000 natives isolated by floods are threatened by starvation. Old Shakey flies 77 missions and drops 1543 tons of corn for food.

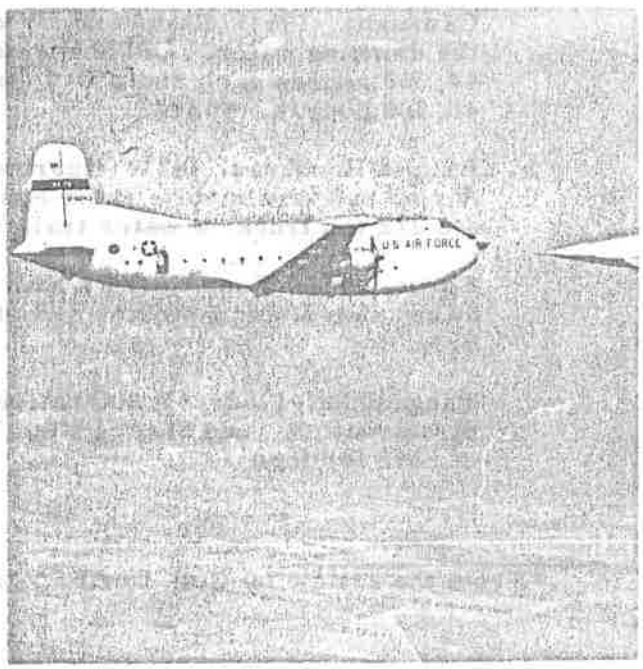
*From the article by Col. Dorff, p. 21.

Laos, 1963: The Tom Dooley hospital is desperately short of drugs. Donated supplies are picked up at Travis for Bangkok.

The list of Shakey's accomplishments does not end here. It is interesting to note that the 22nd played a part in some of these ventures, as marked by the symbol **22**.

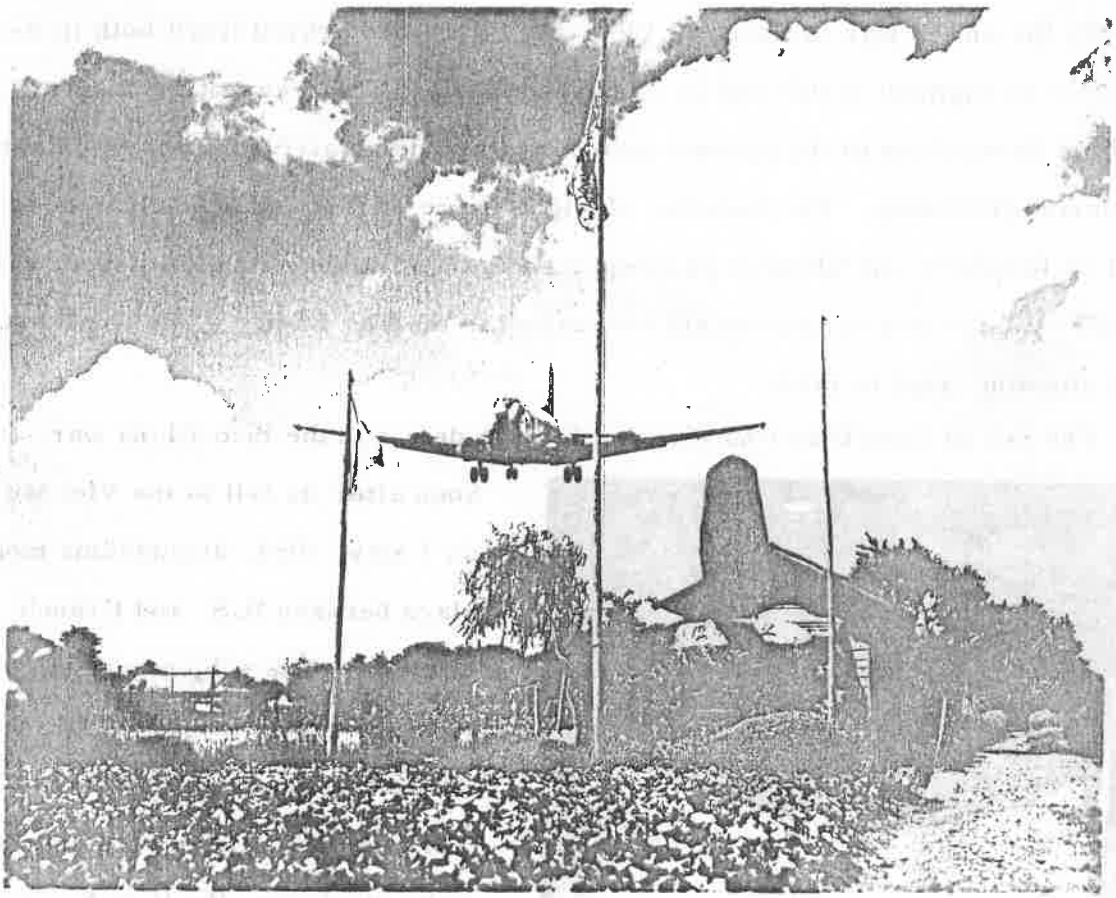
Other crises came and Old Shakey answered the call for airlift on short notice to far-away places --- the Congo crisis the Cuban crisis, the Gulf of Tonkin crisis, and more and more.

She is an old bird now, but she is still an eye-opener and an attractive piece; more people crowd around the old gal to look her over than any other aircraft on the ramp at Tachi during Armed Forces open house. She draws a crowd at any remote base, and the GI's meet her with cameras and looks of disbelief. But her days are numbered as the newer jets come to displace the prop-planes. Smaller, faster aircraft pass her up and leap into the headlines to take the credits; Old Shakey does not mind. She has had her day. Even though she does half of the work of airlift. She is there wherever work is to be done.



Like the old soldier, she will probably just fade away. And then there will be no more Shakeys. But the legend will live on. "Be that as it may transport crewmen for years to come will gather

around to reminisce about the days of the big lady in the skies. She was gross and slab-sided and had a big nose. She had awful tiny wings and putt-putt engines. But man, Old Shakey could fly, she really could fly."*



*From the article by Col. Dorff, p. 21.

PART II

By the end of war in Korea in 1953, the C-124 had proved itself both in its capacity to augment airlift and in its dependability. The crews of the 22nd adapted themselves to the postwar mission of providing airlift for the Far East Command (FECOM). The majority of flights were still in Japan and Korea, as well as Iwo Jima and Okinawa passenger and cargo flights. Another aspect of the 22nd's mission was to provide air evacuation in the Far East.[1] The first test of that mission came in 1954.

The fall of Dien Bien Phu signaled French defeat in the Indo-China war.

Soon after its fall to the Viet Minh on 7 May, 1954, discussions took place between U. S. and French officials. The subject was the possible assistance by USAF in evacuating wounded from Indo-China The routing of air-evac flights was to be via Japan, the U. S. A., and France. The 22nd, as a part of the 315th Air Division, moved 500 French wounded from Tan Son Nhut

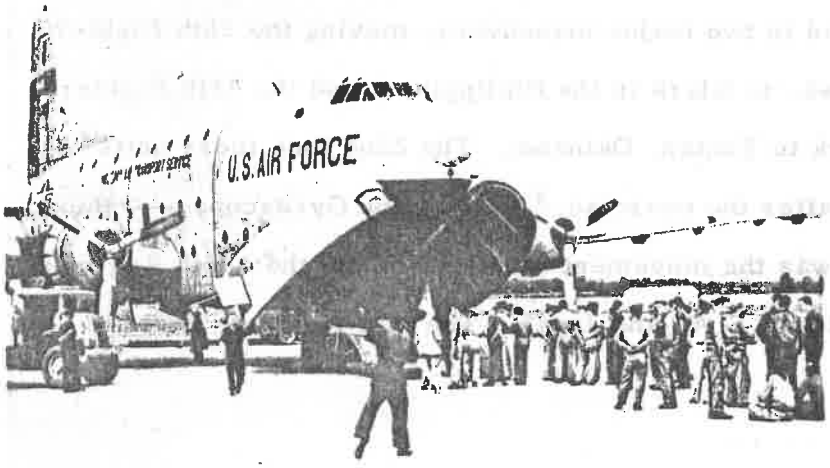
(Saigon) to Tachikawa. The mission was accomplished between 28 June - 11 July 1954.[2] MAC: then MATS, handled the mission from Tachi to France. It is interesting to note that the Double Duece crews who flew the Indo-China evac missions were warned that they could expect hostile fire around the Tan Son Nhut area.

Little did anyone realize at that time the significance of the French defeat in Indo-China; little did the 22nd realize that within a decade the U. S. would be carrying on that same war; and little did the 22nd realize that (Indo-China) Vietnam would become its major mission. But it was only 1954, with little foreshadowing of things to come . . . .

Mobility exercises were big following the Korean war. During the latter part of 1954, the 22nd participated in two major maneuvers, moving the 26th Fighter Squadron from Naha, Okinawa, to Clark in the Philippines; and the 44th Fighter Bomber Squadron from Clark to Yontan, Okinawa. The 22nd took these units back to their home stations after the exercise.[3] Operation Gyroscope --- the greatest airlift of 1955 --- was the movement of the 508th and the 187th Regimental Combat Teams between the U. S. A. and Japan. The last leg from Tachi to

Kyushu was the responsibility of the 22nd.[4] Operation Bare Strip in August of 1955 was a project to test whether troop carrier units could operate from advanced airfields with only minimum equipment and personnel for an indefinite period of time. The 22nd moved on short notice to K-5 near Pyongtaek, Korea, and within 24 hours had established a tent city, communications, kitchens, and a fire department --- and were flying operational missions.[5] In September 1955, another mobility exercise was the airlift of the 8th Fighter Bomber Squadron from Itazuke to Kunsan, Korea, for a ten-day test.[6] These exercises proved that C-124's could move cargo and personnel in conjunction with aircraft deployment, keeping a combat unit fully staffed and supplied.

In August 1954, one of the few "East" missions materialized. The Double Dueces airlifted clothing, food, and other supplies to relieve flood victims in East Pakistan.[7] Major Shadbolt, a navigator in the 22nd from 1954-56, recalls some of the unusual and memorable missions: " . . . One was the MIG-15 which the first North Korean defector flew into South Korea. We hauled it back to Japan under cover of darkness. Another was a whole plane load of money, again hauled in secrecy, at the time of one of the script changes in Korea. And yet another was a cargo dock littered with crusty, rusting, WW II foot mines. We hauled those into Tan Son Nhut for the French who were fighting this war.



Incidentally, the only time we were advised we might pick up ground fire was when we made a low approach pattern at Tourane (now known as Da Nang) in 1956."[8]

In May of 1955, the 22nd paid a return trip to the place of its birth, Australia. Operation Handclasp I and II were goodwill missions to Australia and New Zealand for the purpose of displaying USAF air power to our friends "down under." The Double Dueces were treated as celebrities; thousands toured the Globemasters; hundreds asked for autographs. A crowd of 80,000 toured the aircraft at Essendon airdome, Melbourne. One woman was extremely happy to see the old 22nd donkey again.[9] She had remembered the insignia from the early war years when the "22nd Squadron" was operating from that field. The hospitality of the Aussies certainly had not dimmed since those darker days of 1942.

But all the missions were not of this nature, nor were they as extra rewarding or exciting. The 22nd operated much like an airline, flying cargo and courier missions, and coming in to do an extra job when asked. The last big move came in 1957. In January, at the request of the United Nations, the 22nd participated in the Lebanon crisis, transporting 550 Indonesian troops and equipment from Djakarta to Beirut.[10] And then it

came again: 10 June 1957 the 22nd was reduced to records strength, following a transfer of its aircrews to the 21st TCS. With the inactivation of the 347th TCW in July, the 22nd was assigned to the 1503rd Air Transport Wing, MATS. The 22nd remained on standby status until April 1959, when, on receiving a number of aircrews from the 21st TCS, it became fully operational again. [11]

For the first time in its history, the 22nd was assigned to a major air command which was headquartered in the U. S. A. It became a part of the vast global airlift force --- MATS. Its mission was to maintain air transport for airborne forces, together with resupply. A secondary feature was to maintain a state of readiness for air evacuation in the Far East.

The 22nd was right back in business --- back to mobility, special missions, and scheduled runs. The Pacific was at "peace" for the first time since 1942. China had fallen, the nationalists government having retreated to Formosa; Korea was silent, and French Indo-China had been divided up into four separate nations.

The peace did not last. Crisis followed crisis, and each one changed the Defense Condition (DEFCON) status, which varied from five to two. The requests were many: 1961 saw relief flights to Cambodia during the floods of October; full augmentation forces as all the Squadron aircraft and crews sat out a waiting period during the Formosan crisis from 22 March - 21 May. War games were played in earnest. Operation Tien Bing (Sky Soldier) started in 1961 and set up a pattern which was to be followed up through Sky Soldier VI in 1964. The pattern was air-drop of men and equipment; the "contestants" were U.S. and Republic of China airborne forces. For the first time since those days in New Guinea in 1944, the 22nd again became a tactical air-drop unit.

In 1962, Guam suffered more destruction than it had had during WW II as one of the worst storms in the history of the Pacific struck with full force. The 22nd took part in mercy and relief missions, even flying air-search patterns for some missing fishing boats. In 1963, the 22nd took part in Operation Tidal Wave, which proved the capability of transports to haul large numbers of troops over great distances in a short time period. [13]

By late 1963, the Department of Defense had started to contract large numbers of civilian aircraft to carry the main burden of the scheduled runs. This placed the 22nd in the special-mission business almost full time. Emphasis shifted from the Korea-Japan area to Southeast Asia as flights to Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos became more frequent. The number of 22nd crews deployed in the Southeast Asia area increased from four in January (1963) to 17 in May. [14]

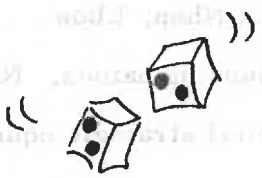
The Cuban crisis of 1963 had shown the need for a large fleet for formation-air-drop qualified crews. Formation flying first started on 19 September 1962 by

Lt Col David M. Hill, 22nd Sq Commander Accepts The 1963 MATS Carp Competition First Place Award From General Glenn R. Birchard

Lt Col Arthur C. Reinhart, Jr., Receives The AF Commendation Medal From Colonel Eugene H. Dyke, At The Completion Of His Tour Of Duty As 22nd Squadron Commander (April 1965)

MATS directive. The 22nd checked out its first qualified personnel ten days later, and had 15 crews qualified by June of 1963. In the fall of that same year, a 22nd crew won first place in the MATS CARP (Computed Air Release Point) Competition. [15]

By 1964, the pattern of operations --- the new emphasis --- had emerged. Air drop was once again important, added to the already-present mission of air-lifting troops, supplies, and cargo and maintaining an air evacuation potential for the Far East. Southeast Asia had become the center of U. S. attention. The 22nd was an important part of the airlift plan. Its Shakeys were the only ones stationed in the Far East by June of 1964, and the responsibility of outsized cargo rested squarely on the broad back of that stubborn little donkey.



CHAPTER FIVE

CONFLICT --- SOUTHEAST ASIA

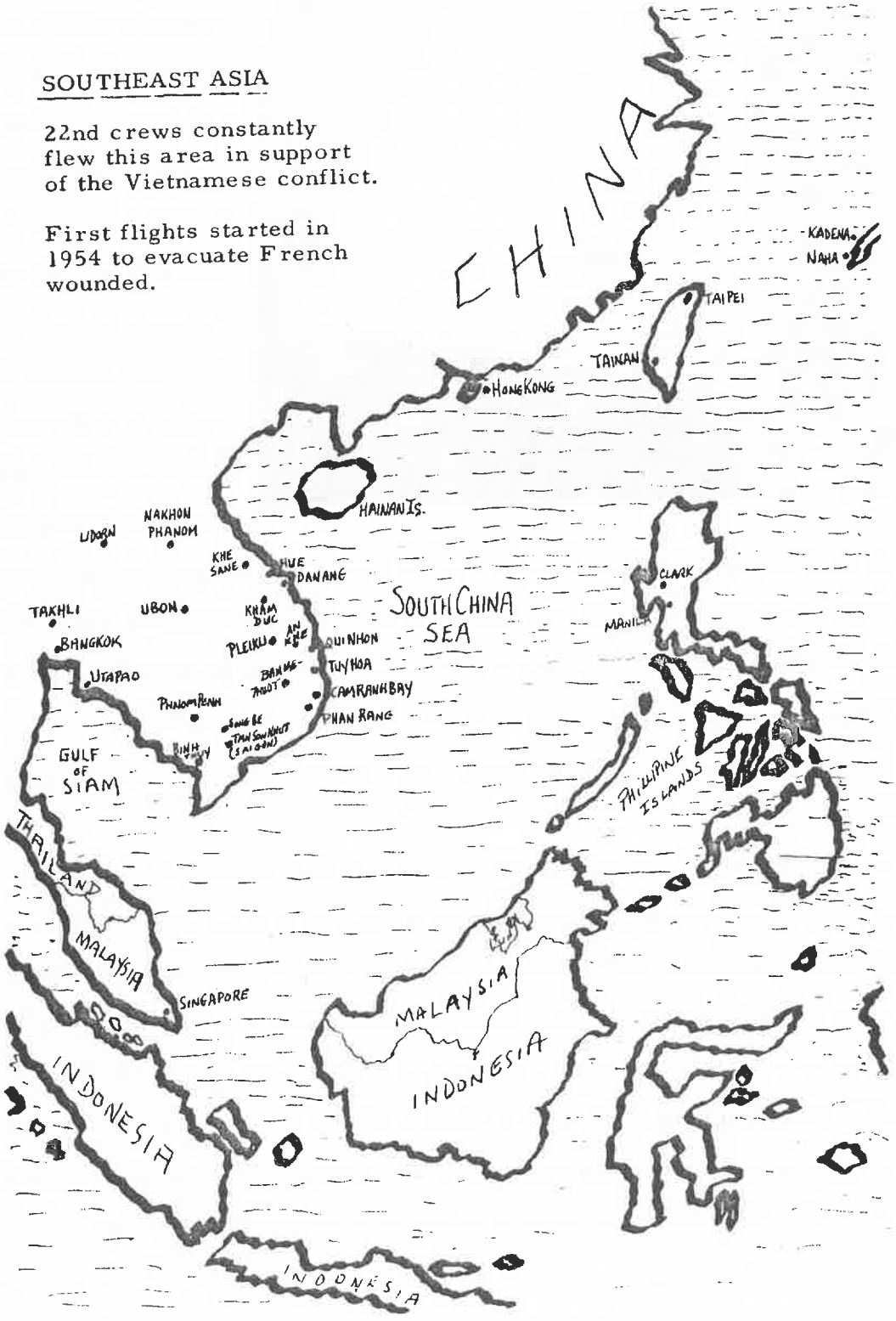
Yes, the stubborn donkey, the mad mule, that determined symbol of the Double Deuces still carried the big loads in the 60's just as it had done in the early forty's and fifty's. The far east area of operations remained the same, but the center of concentration had shifted slightly. No more names like Lae, Nadzab, Wau or Leyte. Occassional stops into Osan, Pusan, Kunsan and Kimpo that brought back memories. But 22nd itineraries now predominately listed such stops: Danang, Song Be, Qui Nhon, Ubon . . . Nakhon Phanom. More strange places with exotic, far-sounding names. Names that once again meant urgently needed combat airlift, vital strategic equipment, as well as the odds and ends, the nuts and bolts required to make things function with a modicum of crude efficiency. For this was the "limited war" of the sixties --- the Vietnam conflict --- and the airlift support encompassed all of Southeast Asia.

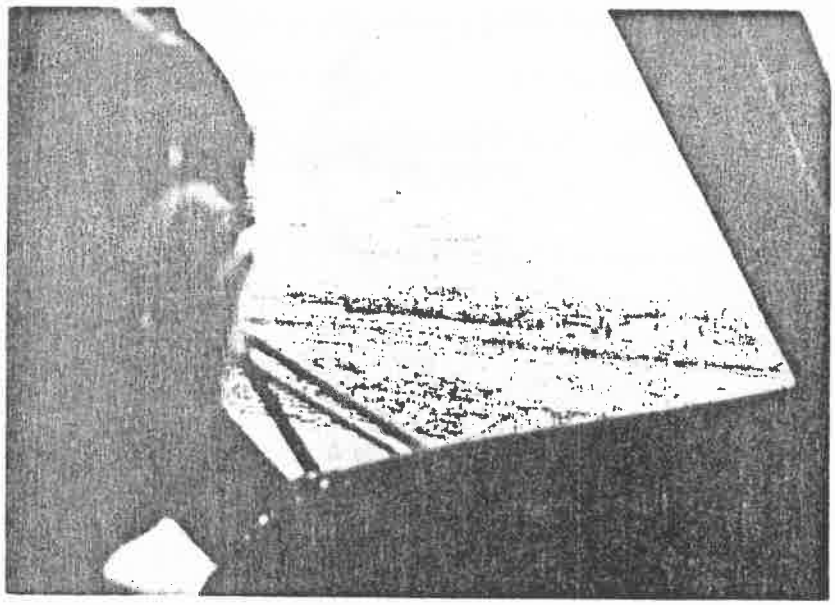
With the steady increase of U. S. participation in the war, there was no longer time for mobility exercises and war-games. The mid-sixties found the 22nd with a larger and larger airlift support role in Southeast Asia. The

SOUTHEAST ASIA

22nd crews constantly flew this area in support of the Vietnamese conflict.

First flights started in 1954 to evacuate French wounded.





22nd represented the outsized airlift capability for the area, hauling helicopters in and out, moving bulldozers, howitzers, and everything that was needed, when it was needed.

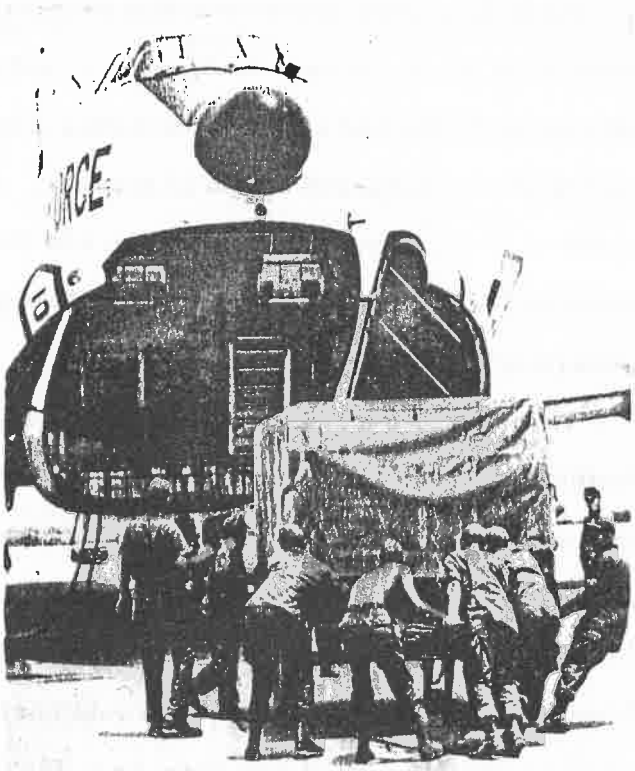
In fulfilling the key role, C-124's manned by 22nd crews became the first MAC aircraft to land at such newly operational fields as Chu Lai, Phan Rang, Phu Cat, Ban Me Thout and many others. 22nd Old Shakey's were the only MAC cargo aircraft into such fields as Khe Sanhe, Kham Duc, An Khe, Song Be and Phitsanulok. Many of these were unusual fields, remote fields, and at times, besieged fields. The 22nd functioned "business as usual" with typical disregard for the dangers involved.

In 1965 the Squadron intensified its tactical drop training to cover any contingency. Crews were drop qualified on the Kanto Plain local-area Patton and Mito drop zones. Currency was strictly maintained until tactical restrictions were placed on C-124 aircraft. Concurrently in 1965, airlift requirements in Vietnam increased to a point where 22nd crews began staging out of Tan Son Nhut Air Base.[1] This established the pattern that would be followed in the succeeding years: Each escalation, each new offensive, brought an increase in the number of 22nd crews directed into a greater number of Vietnamese airfields.

As U. S. ground forces steadily increased, U. S. and Vietnamese aviators stepped-up air operations from an ever-expanding number of fields. Air patches became airfields and airfields became air bases as construction boomed to keep pace with the increased tempo of the war. American troops, twice the 185,000 figure of 1965, along with Australian and Vietnamese troops, scoured the underbrush in search of "Charlie," and the 22nd played a major role in supporting these hunters of the Viet Cong.

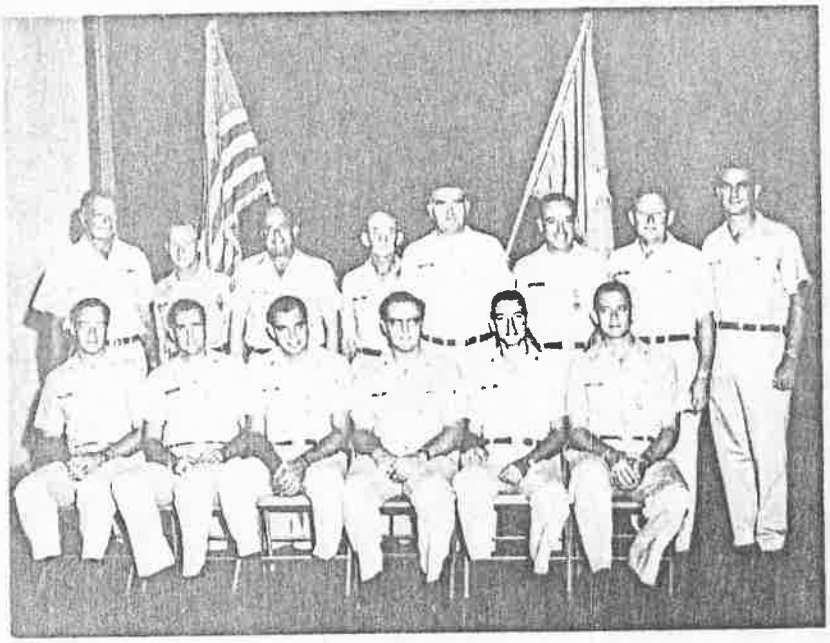
Through 1966 and 1967 the 22nd hauled over a million tons into and throughout Southeast Asia --- outsized construction vehicles, communications equipment, food --- everything from vans to vegetables. Tuy Hoa became operationally complete as a result of a number of 22nd shuttles.[2] Phu Cat, Binh Thuy, Udorn, Takhli and many others saw the fat birds, the old shakemasters flown by the 22nd bring in load after load of needed equipment. 22nd crews hauled every piece of outsized cargo airlifted into Song Be. The first shuttles took place in early April of 1967 when, in conjuction with Operation Harvest Moon in War Zone D, two 22nd crews led by Captains Monte G. McClean and Ralph A. Lerch made three flights from Bien Hoa into Song Be. They airlifted D7E bulldozers in direct support of the 79th Group Engineers. The 79th needed the equipment to build another forward field 67 miles northeast of Saigon. The news release from the 79th EG-IO, reporting directly from Song Be, particularly acknowledge the fact that

those landings of the C-124's in the forward combat area had made it "possible for the 79th Group Engineers to perform their mission in Operation Harvest Moon." The 22nd still provides the only outsized airlift in support of Song Be's continuing requirements. The story is told, and a true one, of a near altercation occurring when a 22nd crew member mentioned a Song Be shuttle. Another disbelieving aircrew member loudly protested: "No C-124 has been into Song Be - - - they couldn't get in there!" Since the field measures 4100'X 100' in rather hazardous enemy infested terrain, his disbelief was readily understandable. No doubt he would have been even more shocked at how often 22nd Globemasters have been in and out of there - - - on more than one occassion with the field under attack. But 22nd operations were not limited to Song Be — they ranged over the entire peninsila from Hue and Khe Sanhe on down to Vung Tau and Binh Thuy, inland as well as coastal.



The record speaks for itself: 1965 saw the Squadron log 1926 hours of combat time with a total of 1588 combat sorties. Totals for 1966 rose to 3,557 hours logged with 1,839 sorties and for 1967: 3,953 hours on a total of 1,564

USAF



sorties. Since 1966 the 22nd has averaged about 315 hours combat time a month[3] with an average of about 90 landings per month in the war zone. From August 1964 to October 1968 the 22nd had logged 13, 162 hours of combat time in the Vietnam conflict.[4] As a result of this high involvement with the war, the 22nd has become one of the most decorated squadrons in the Air Force. Of flying units not stationed in SEA or deployed there on a TDY basis, the Double Deuces probably are the most highly decorated squadron in the present war: From January 1965 to October 1968 over 425 Air Medals were awarded to members of the 22nd. 1967 alone saw 147 recommendations for Air Medals. Three quarters of 1968 saw up to 230 recommendations submitted.[5]

Operating into Song Be on 14 September 1967 on a high priority combat essential mission, two 22nd crews led by Major Donald G. Lawson and Captain Jerry L. Mason airlifted a record 385, 000 pounds of vitally needed cargo, self-propelled howitzers, armored trucks and support equipment from Bien Hoa. Song Be was under attack at the time. In one 10 hour daylight period, a total of eight low-level shuttles was made over enemy infested terrain. The two crews

earned 12 Distinguished Flying Crosses for this example of "extraordinary, professionalism, superior airmanship, and profound devotion to duty."[6]

Through all the combat airlift, other developments took place. 1966 brought the 22nd another name change as the Military Air Transport Service (MATS) --- the Squadron's major command -- became the Military Airlift Command (MAC). The old 22nd Troop Carrier then became the 22nd Military Airlift Squadron. Said Lt Col Ralph F. Jackson, Squadron commander at the time, "The name has changed, but the mission remains the same --- moving vital cargo." This the 22nd continued to do, efficiently and safely as the war escalated through 1966 and 1967.

A noteworthy airlift achievement took place in June of 1967 when a 22nd manned C-124 made religious history. They airlifted a statue of the Buddha --- Gautama Siddhartha --- the founder of Buddhism, from Bangkok, Thailand to Gaya, India. The airlift of the 9,460 pound statue-cast in solid gold - was requested by Field Marshall T. Kittikachorn, Prime Minister of Thailand.[7] "The Globemaster crew commanded by Major Clarence E. Inman, departed Tachikawa AB, Japan, for Bangkok on the first leg of the unusual airlift mission.

- - - In Bangkok, the crew was briefed on the importance of the mission and loading and unloading procedures to be followed /to meet/ requirements that the statue be carried in an upright and face-forward position, and /also/ that the wrapped and crated statue not be touched by any non-Buddhist. - - - Once loaded for shipment, the statue remained overnight under a tight security guard - - - The aircrew had planned an early departure - - - However, when they arrived at the aircraft, they were informed that the Prime Minister was enroute to the airport to view the take-off.

"At 6:35 a.m., the Prime Minister arrived under police escort. He individually greeted each member of the flight crew - - - Then accompanied by his wife and other Thai officials, he boaded the aircraft to place a wreath of flowers atop the crates containing the monumental figure.

"Moments later, as the aircraft pulled away from the ramp with TSgt Wayne Monsen riding in the scanner position, the upper half of his body protruding from the top of the plane, several hundred Thai well-wishers waved goodbye.

"The sergeant waved back, then noticed the Prime Minister saluting the departing airplane. Assuming a position as close to attention as was possible under the circumstances, Monsen returned the salute on behalf of the aircraft commander and the Air Force. . . .

"The return of the statue to India takes the Buddha back 'to his original environment with peace and happiness.' The Thai Prime Minister said.

"Field Marshall Kittikachorn also commented that the mission represented not only the capabilities of the U. S. Air Force, but also demonstrated the close relationship which exists between the U. S. and Thailand."[8]

In November of 1967 Lt Col Louis H. Daugherty assumed command of the 22nd on the departure of Colonel Jackson. During his command the Double Deuces increased their percentages of combat essential and outsized cargo airlifted.

The end of 1967 also saw the 22nd play an active role in another aviation milestone. On December 23 a C-124 commanded by Captain George C. Vermef, Jr., landed at Tachikawa AB, Japan to give the 61st Military Airlift Wing --- the Squadron's parent organization --- over 750,000 hours of accident free flying.[9] This record was the highest total ever amassed in aviation history. The record is still unbroken and now well over 800,000 hours.

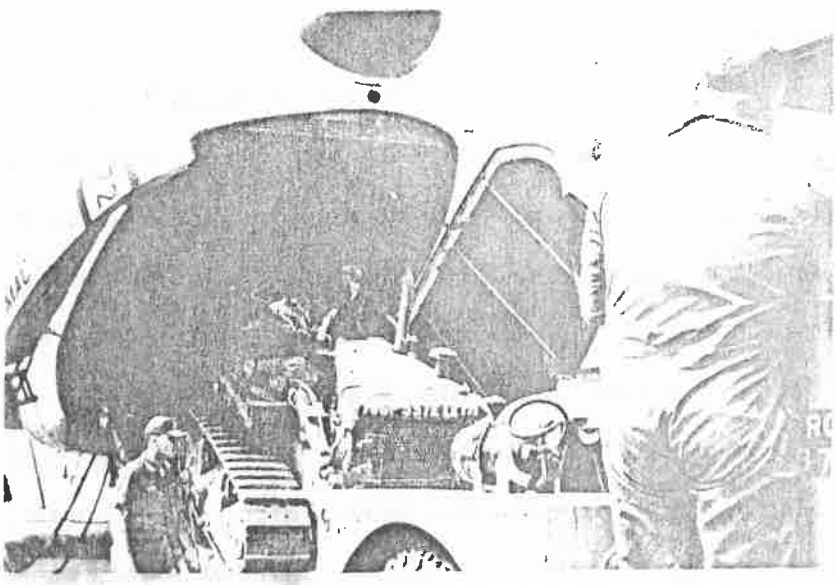
As 1967 rolled into the new year, a fresh crisis developed. The guns of June 1950 were re-echoed on 23 January 1968. North Korea seized the U. S. S. Pueblo! The Defense Condition index rapidly dropped from five to two and 22nd crews were placed on immediate alert. A few brief hours after the seizure they had already commenced round-the-clock shuttles into the various South Korean airfields. It was almost a grim replay of the early days of mid-1950 when, with the 6th TCS, they had "held the fort alone." Again the 22nd, with its convenient Tachikawa location, proved an early workhorse in the airlift movement.

Despite the Korean crisis, Squadron commitment to the Vietnam conflict never lessened. The unselfish dedication of the men of the Double Deuce enabled all airlift requirements to be met.

January quickly slipped into February and southward, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese launched their Lunar New Year offensive. As this 1968 Communist Tet offensive swept into high gear the fragged loads for 22nd crews throughout RVN increased proportionately. Shewfelt, Anderson, Fausey, Mason, Mitchell and other 22nd crews shuttled in and out of Tan Son Nhut, Song Be, and scores of other fields. As usual it was the same old pattern repeated again and again.

Spring came, but the guns still sounded and bombs still pounded the Vietnamese countryside. Talk

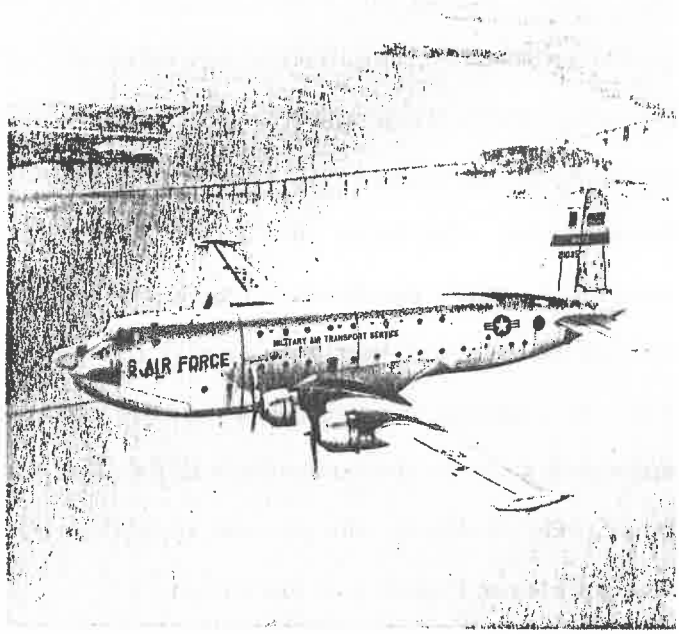
of negotiations increased. With it came an intensification of Communist offensive pressure throughout the peninsula. The siege at Khe Sanhe continued with all its dramatic ramifications. 22nd loadmasters Bevill, Brown, and Lamb - TDY to overcommitted C-123 units in RVN --- shuttled in and out of the beleaguered fortress. Despite a lengthy, costly siege, Khe Sanhe held.



By mid-April negotiations seemed close, and the Communist pressure increased. Kham Duc was besieged as the enemy struggled more fiercely for victories to gain "negotiating advantages." The push on Kham Duc intensified as the peace talks drew closer. Kham Duc's defenses needed reinforcing. As part of the necessary build-up, two 40,000 pound bulldozers had to be airlifted over from Pleiku. On April 18th a 22nd crew, Major Merritt B. Pound, Jr., in command, made the first of two sorties from Pleiku without incident. The second shuttle was met with enemy fire so severly concentrated, it was impossible to continue the approach without risking loss of the aircraft and crew. This approach area in the immediate Kham Duc vicinity was partially secured a week later. On 25 April, the second 40,000 pound load was safely airlifted into Kham Duc by Major Pound and his crew. [10]

The peace conference seemed imminent and the enemy pushed harder to gain every advantage possible. Kham Duc was overrun in early May, approximately one week after Major Pound's second shuttle. Danang was rocketed. Saigon was struck by terrorist attacks. By mid-May it was official: Preliminary peace talks between the U. S. and north Vietnam had convened at Paris, France. There was however, little cause for optimism. The communists were past masters of the "talk and fight/fight and talk" strategy, as they had aptly demonstrated to the French after the fall of Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

Predictably, despite the Paris talks, fighting continued. Through it all the 22nd continued to move the loads. In late May Double Deuce crews supported a large Marine offensive, hauling 285, 000 pounds of combat essential cargo with eight sorties over a five day period. At the same time, over 2, 300 miles away, a series of earthquakes rocked northern Honshu, Japan including Misawa AB. A few hours after the quakes had struck, 22nd crews were airborne with the first of many shuttles to Misawa. Major Richard H. Stevens and his crew led the first sortie. Within four days of the initial quake --- the worst since 1964 --- eight of the 22nd crews and two TAC C-130 crews had airlifted over 257, 000 pounds of blankets, food, heavy equipment, and other sorely needed relief supplies to the inhabitants of the area. [11]



Spring quickly faded into summer as June came and went. Ground fighting tapered off as the peace conference dragged along into July. On 15 July, Lt Col Frank W. Contestable assumed command of the 22nd, having vacated the post of Chief of Aircrew Standardization for the 61st Military Airlift Wing. On taking command his comments were: "I am extremely proud to have the opportunity of commanding this unit which has for its motto 'The Best in the Pacific.' Having closely observed your past performance, I have no doubt concerning the accuracy of this motto. . . . In fact, I feel it is somewhat on the conservative side."

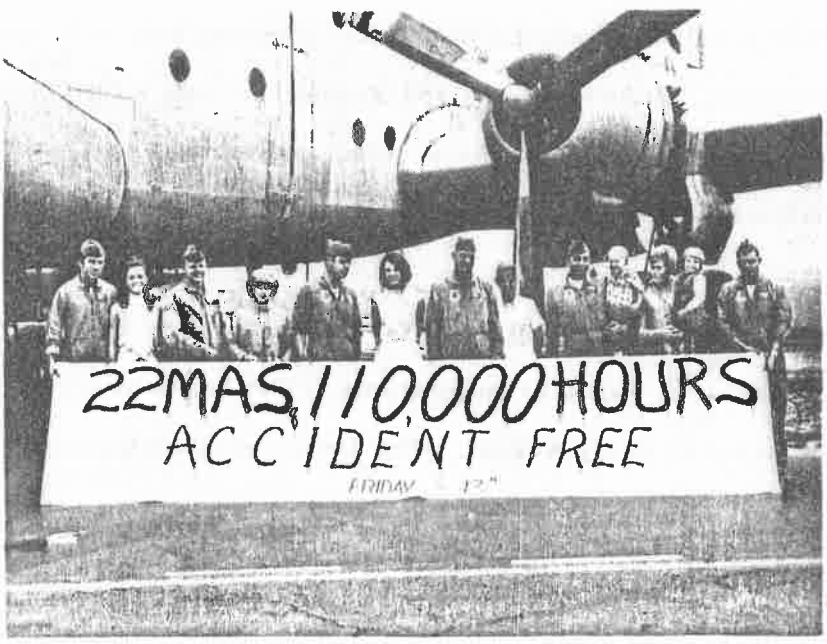
Airlift flowed smoothly as July slipped into August. The Paris talks progressed nowhere rapidly as Hanoi's agents wrangled for a total bombing halt of North Vietnam. Through all the talking, bickering, and speculating, the war continued. But it continued at a slackened pace. Still, weapons, food, vehicles continued to be moved, with the 22nd hauling its share. But now there were rumors of the Squadron's closing. . . .

In Paris, Hanoi's negotiators seemed content to let the conference drag as they awaited the outcome of the U. S. political conventions. The Republicans settled on the Nixon-Agnew ticket in early August. The Democrats convened in

late August, eventually selecting a Humphrey-Muskie slate. As if to voice total dissatisfaction with both choices, the Viet Cong shattered the two month lull in ground fighting. They mounted an assault against Tay Ninh, west of Saigon. The area northwest of Saigon near the Cambodian border subsequently erupted. Unsurprisingly, on 2 September, Major Clarence E. Inman and his crew flew a 22nd C-124 from Bien Hoa to Song Be. The combat essential cargo aboard was a 44,000 pound self-propelled howitzer which the Army needed to help cope with the renewed enemy activities in the area.[12] Other 22nd crews were busy flying less dramatic, but equally essential loads in and out of the theater, as the Squadron continued to log as high as 25% of its monthly sorties in the combat zone.

Despite this significant percentage of combat zone time, with the associated unusual field RVN landings -- often with the added hazard of enemy ground fire -- the Squadron still maintained its fine safety record. On Friday the 13th of September, Captain Cameron W. Foster and his crew touched down at Tachikawa AB, Japan to push the 22nd just over 110,000 hours of accident free flying.[13] This total represented a six and a half year interim without an aircraft accident.

The rumors of the 22nd closing took on more substance with each passing month. It soon became a definite thing with rumors then being circulated about a possible extension beyond June of 1969 --- the target closing date



October and November rapidly flew into December. Bombing was halted over North Vietnam in late October although there was no confirmed evidence that the Communists would reciprocate by easing their pressures in the south. Ground fighting continued sporadically in the south through November, but it was less extensive. December came in with a recess in the Paris talks. They were to resume in an expanded form which would include South Vietnam and the National Liberation Front (NLF), i.e., the Viet Cong. This, however, precipitated a major dispute over whether or not the NLF would or would not be recognized as a separate entity and equal party. The dispute therefore stretched into possible seating arrangements if and when the talks resumed.

The fighting continued. In early December four C-124 globemasters commanded by Major Gerald N. Honn and Captains Ralph A. Lerch, John W. Jensen, and Michael R. Rigolizzo, transported more than 150 tons of equipment for an Army assault helicopter company in South Vietnam.

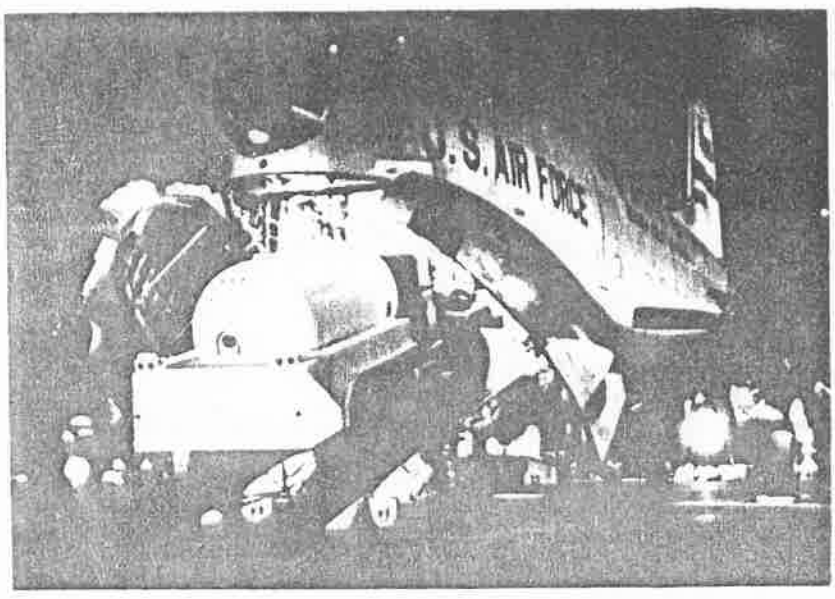
". . . The MAC crews flew nine sorties, airlifting the unit nearly 200 miles from their base camp near Tuy Hoa AB, to a forward combat position in the III Corps tactical zone.

"The bulk of the cargo consisted of heavy trucks and vans used by the helicopter company as a repair shop for sheet metal, communications equipment, engines and guns.

"With its cavernous hold, the C-124 is especially suited for transporting this type of bulky outsized cargo.

"Major Gerald Honn, mission commander for the airlift, noted . . . 'The spirited cooperation of all crew members made the mission run smothly . . . . But the skillful effort of the loadmasters was the key factor in accomplishing the mission safely in the minimum possible time'."[14]

At about the time this mission was being inaugurated, General Howell M. Estes Jr., Commander of MAC, paid a visit to the Squadron accompanied by Major General James C. Sherrill, 22nd Air Force Commander, Brigadier General Ernest J. White, Jr., 61st Military Airlift Wing Commander, and Colonel Lyle S. Thomas, 65th Military Airlift Group Commander. After presenting five Air Medals to members of the 22nd Squadron for their aerial achievements in Vietnam, General Estes confirmed the inevitable: No extension beyond the 30th of June 1969 —— the probability of closing up to three months earlier. MAC needed people for the new giant of the fleet --- the mammoth C5A. Once more the end seemed near. The mad mule, the stubborn 22nd donkey was again about to be retired. . . .



EPILOGUE

History is a living thing — a continuing cycle wherein the events of past days have a distinct bearing on present and future events. In this continuing historical cycle the 22nd has reached its here-and-now of 1969 with a rich and fruitful twenty-seven year past. Today, as in the preceeding years, the men of the 22nd still continue in the fine tradition of their counterparts of yore. Yes, the name changes: 22nd Transport Squadron, 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron, 22nd Military Airlift Squadron, it matters not; the mission remains the same. . . . .

Wau, Leyte, Luzon, Pusan, Panmunjom — they are not forgotten. Today the places have different, equally strange sounding names, ... But the vital airlift is still being accomplished, the medals and decorations still being won.

Now, as in the past, the demise of the Squadron looms iminent. However the Double Deuces have time and again demonstrated their kinship to the phoenix; as often as it dies, it resurrects itself in ever greater glory. If once again the Double Deuces disappear as programmed, if the stubborn donkey drops from sight, somewhere at some future time he'll come riding out again. . . .

We of the 22nd today form the bridge, the link between the heroes of yesterday and those who will no doubt come tomorrow. Together we are joined by the common bond of having belonged to the "Best in the Pacific." In the words of Lt Col Frank W. Contestable, 22nd Commander, "Not just the Best in the Pacific, . . The Best, period."

E. V. T., Jr.

Chronological Summary

3 April 1942	Established at Essendon Airdrome, Melbourne, Australia, as the 22nd Transport Squadron
1942	Assigned to 374th Troop Carrier Group
1942	Name changed to 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron
1942	Papuan Campaign (Awarded Distinguished Unit Citation)
1942	Moved to Townesville, Australia
1943	Converted to C-47 Sky Trains
1943	Moved to Port Moresby, New Guinea
1943	New Guinese Campaign (Awarded Distinguished Unit Citation)
October 1943	Moved to Townesville, Australia
1944	16 aircraft detachment fly R&R from Lae
20-21 May 1945	Battle of Libby Field (Awarded Presidential Unit Citation)
1945	Converted to C-46 Commando
August 1945	Moved from Finschafen to Nielson Field, Lazon, Philippines
31 January 1946	Deactivated at Nielson Field
15 October 1946	Reactivated at Nichols Field, Philippines
1946 - 1947	Conversion to C-54s
1948	Berlin airlift
November 1948	Transferred From Berlin to Tachikawa AB, Japan without men and equipment (records maintenance only)
April 1949	Active flying mission from Tachikawa AB (C-54 and C-46 aircraft)

June-September 1950	Korean airlift (Awarded Presidential Unit Citation)
November 1950	22nd evacuates wounded from chosen reservoir
1951	U. N. counter offensive
16-17 May 1952	22nd airlifts 187th Regimental Combat Team to Kote-Do, Korea to quell POW riots
1952	Conversion to C-124 Globemasters
1954	Evacuation of French wounded from Battle of Dien Bien Phu
September 1954	Flood relief mercy missions to Pakistan
1955	Operation Handclasp I and II
1957	Lebanon Crisis
10 June 1957	Reduced to records strength again
April 1959	Reactivated and assigned to MATS
1961	Mercy missions to Cambodia
1962	Typhoon relief missions to aid Guam
1962	Formation flying inaugurated
1963	Operation Tidal Wave
1963	1st place in MATS CARP Competition
1964	SEA commitment increases
1965	Tactical drop training intensified
January 1966	Name changed to 22nd Military Airlift Squadron
1966	Tuy Hoa build-up
April 1967	Song Be landings in support of Operation Harvest Moon
June 1967	Airlift gold Buddha from Thailand to India at request of Thai Government

September 1967	Song Be operation (two crews earn Distinguished Flying Cross)
December 1967	22nd crew puts 61st Wing over 750,000 hour flying safety plateau
January 1968	Pueblo Crisis -- Korean airlift (Combat Fox)
February 1968	Airlift support against Tet offensive
April 1968	Airlift support of Kham Duc
May 1968	Honshu, Japan earthquake relief
May 1968	Marine offensive airlift support
31 September 1968	Logs 110,000 hours accident free
December 1968	Airlift support for an Army assault helicopter company from Tuy Hoa

Photo Listings

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71	22nd Members with Their Hard Earned Air Medals
72	A Gas Truck Inches Out of 22nd Globemaster Somewhere in Thailand

ANGELS GARD
CHILDREN'S HOME
SPONSORED BY THE 22N
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CFAAB PL 12 JULY 47 22ND TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON

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3. Ibid. p. 2.
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6. History of the 22nd TCS, Vernon C. Watson, p. 2.
7. Moresby to Manila, op. cit. p. 3.
8. History of the 22nd TCS, Maurer Maurer, USAF Historical Division, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, p. 1.
9. Moresby to Manila, op. cit. p. 3.
10. Ibid. p. 4.
11. Ibid. p. 6.
12. Maurer, op. cit. p. 2.
13. History of the 75th Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force.
14. The 22nd was redesignated as the 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron on 26 July, 1942. Maurer, op. cit. p. 6.
15. Moresby to Manila, op. cit. p. 6.
16. Ibid. p. 10.
17. Maurer, op. cit. p. 1.
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19. Watson, op. cit. p. 2.*
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*Enemy air power had been severly crippled by the end of 1942. The last display of Japanese air power came on 12 April 1943, when shortly after noon 100 Japanese bombers and fighters attacked Ward's Drome, catching the troop carriers on the ground. A few of the 22nd Squadron's ships were sprayed with shrapnel, but no serious damage was evident.

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4. Norton H. Van Sicklen, Col., USAF (Ret.), personal recollections, letter of 16 January 1966, p. 2.
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CHAPTER 3: FOOTNOTES AND CREDITS

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27. Ibid., p. 68.

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29. History of the 315th Air Division, January - June 1952.

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34. History of the 315th Air Division, June - December 1952.

35. Report on the Korean War, 315th Air Division, 15 November 1953.

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2. History of the 65th Military Airlift Group, 1 October 1966 to 31 December 1966, chapter 10, p. 24.

3. History of the 61st Military Airlift Wing, 1 July - 31 December 1967, chapter 3, p. 165 and 166.

4. Cf. records on file in 22MAS Historical Section.

5. Cf. records on file in 22MASq Awards and Decorations Section.

6. Cf. citation to accompany the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross received by each crew member. In addition to Major Lawson and Capt Mason, the 22nd crew members receiving the award were: Capt Ralph E. Retter, Capt Michael R. Rigolizzo, Pilots; Capt Richard C. Dillenbeck, 1/Lt Billie R. Carpenter, Navigators; MSgt Frank B. Adkins, MSgt Lawrence L. Yarborough, and MSgt Myron E. Rion, Flight Engineers; MSgt Clarence D. Hyleman and TSgt Robert S. Kivett, Loadmasters.

   Distinguished Flying Cross for SSgt Edward G. Delgado, Flight Engineer still pending.

7. Cf. Directorate of Information, 315th Air Division (PACAF) Tachikawa AB, Japan, News Release 6-67-5, dated 14 June 1967.

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